

February 6, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 489 Maryland Department of Labor – Study on Building Code Requirements for Single–Staircase Buildings

Dear Chairman Smith:

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA), representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **HB 489 Maryland Department of Labor – Study on Building Code Requirements for Single–Staircase Buildings**.

This bill requires the Department of Labor to study and make recommendations regarding building code requirements for single-staircase buildings. The study will specifically recommend amendments to the Maryland Building Performance Standards to authorize the construction of single-staircase buildings up to six stories above grade plane. We believe this begins the conversation about much-needed building code reforms in our state. Other jurisdictions around the country have changed their building codes to allow for the development of more single-staircase properties above three stories and Maryland is making the right decision in following suit. The code change will open up more opportunities for small lot infill development, which focuses on construction on underutilized or subdivided lots in constrained urban areas. These buildings are built with a central staircase instead of an extended corridor, which reduces the overall footprint of the building. Encouraging more of this type of development will allow jurisdictions that don't have a lot of developable land to use it more efficiently and will get more affordable units built in the State of Maryland.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee