

2/28/25

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Governor Wes Moore's Housing for Jobs Act, a critical step toward addressing Maryland's affordable housing crisis and ensuring that hardworking Marylanders have access to stable, affordable homes. This legislation is not just about housing—it is about economic opportunity, workforce stability, and the long-term prosperity of our state.

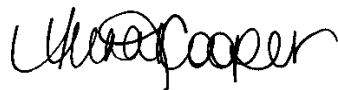
According to the Maryland ALICE Report, nearly 40% of Maryland households struggle to afford basic necessities- including housing, despite being employed. These are the families of our teachers, healthcare providers, retail employees, and service industry professionals who earn above the federal poverty level but still cannot meet the rising costs of living in Maryland. Housing instability forces many of these workers to make impossible choices between rent, healthcare, childcare, and transportation.

Furthermore, housing is a top concern for Marylanders. Polls and studies consistently show that affordable housing ranks among the most pressing issues for residents, as rising home prices and rental costs outpace wage growth. Without bold action, Maryland risks losing its skilled workforce to more affordable states, creating further strain on local economies and businesses.

The Housing for Jobs Act will help bridge this gap by expanding access to affordable housing, incentivizing workforce housing development, and ensuring that Maryland remains an attractive place for both workers and businesses. By investing in housing, we invest in economic growth, job stability, and stronger communities.

I urge you to support this essential legislation and take decisive action to ensure that all Marylanders, regardless of income, have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration.

In solidarity and with gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Auna Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Auna Cooper, LMSW

Associate Vice President of Housing