

1610 Riderwood Drive, Lutherville, MD 21093

March 4, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates

Sent Via Email

Re: HB 503, Unfavorable Position

Dear Chairman Korman & Committee Members:

I am writing to strongly object to House Bill 503, the so called "Housing for Jobs Act". My most basic objection to this bill is that the Maryland Legislature, and the State bureaucracy, ought not to be involved in local land use and development decisions. That authority should be held and used by local charter counties and municipalities, not at the State level.

Even beyond that basic philosophical difference, many of the basic premises of the bill are highly flawed. For example, the bill seeks to create a jobs to housing ratio of 1.5 or less throughout the State. Let me ask how the following example fits into that ratio? If a couple owns a dwelling unit, and each member of that couple holds a full-time job, the ratio for this couple would be 2.0 ( 2 jobs divided by one home equals a ratio of 2). The ratio is a perfectly normal circumstance for millions of Marylanders, yet it would be above the ideal ratio for this bill. Further, if you add in one dependent, who has finished school but not left the "nest" yet, the ratio rises to 3.0.

Secondly, there is no clarification on what jobs will be counted to determine if a housing gap exists. Are part-time jobs of twenty hours per week counted around the State? Or, is the job count only related to full time jobs. That distinction will make a dramatic difference in the determination of the ratio.

Finally, this legislation seeks to minimize school capacity issues in favor of promoting housing development. Many jurisdictions around the State have ignored school capacity problems for a number of years, and this bill will only exacerbate that problem of school capacity.

This bill is clearly WRONG on several different levels, and it should not get out of committee.

Sincerely,

Eric Rockel