

LeadingAge Maryland - 2025 - HB 503 - Housing For

Uploaded by: Aaron Greenfield

Position: FAV



TO: House Environment and Transportation Committee
FROM: LeadingAge Maryland
SUBJECT: House Bill 503, Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
DATE: March 4, 2025
POSITION: Favorable

LeadingAge Maryland supports House Bill 503, Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act).

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 150 not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. Uniquely, LeadingAge Maryland represents more than 100 affordable senior housing communities across the state. Members of LeadingAge Maryland provide health care, housing, and services to more than 20,000 older persons each year. Our mission is to be the trusted voice for aging in Maryland, and our vision is that Maryland is a state where older adults have access to the services they need, when they need them, in the place they call home.

Developing affordable senior housing is time consuming, expensive, and challenging. It is made even more difficult by inconsistent and unpredictable local development decisions. Many nonprofit development organizations including our members have spent tens of thousands of dollars to begin projects, gained support and worked collaboratively with local communities and zoning boards, only to have a project denied by the county council. At a time where affordable housing is in critically short supply, particularly for older adults, our state cannot afford to continue in this way.

House Bill 503 takes a critical step towards addressing the affordable housing shortage in Maryland. By requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps, this bill will help identify areas where affordable housing is most needed. The bill's provisions for reducing local housing infrastructure gaps, such as allowing for the subtraction of housing units built near rail stations or affordable housing units, will also help to incentivize the development of affordable housing.

Furthermore, the bill's emphasis on objective, written development standards will help to ensure that housing development projects are approved in a fair and transparent manner. This

will help to reduce the uncertainty and delays that often plague housing development projects, making it easier to bring affordable housing options to market.

The need for affordable housing in Maryland is dire. The state's housing market has become increasingly unaffordable, with many residents struggling to find housing that meets their needs and fits their budget. This is particularly true for older adults, who often live on fixed incomes and face unique challenges in finding affordable housing. The importance of affordable senior housing cannot be overstated. Those 65 and over are experiencing homelessness at higher rates than other age groups, and as our state's population ages, the demand for affordable housing options that cater to seniors' needs will only continue to grow. Affordable senior housing is not just a matter of providing a roof over someone's head; it's about creating a safe, supportive, and healthy environment that allows seniors to thrive.

LeadingAge Maryland urges the passage of House Bill 503, which will help to address the critical need for affordable housing in Maryland. By supporting this bill, we can take a crucial step towards creating a more equitable and sustainable housing market that meets the needs of all Marylanders, particularly our older adults.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report for House Bill 503.

For more information, please contact Aaron Greenfield at 410.446.1992 or aaron@agreenfieldlaw.com

Written Testimony SB430 HB503.pdf

Uploaded by: Auna Cooper

Position: FAV

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.

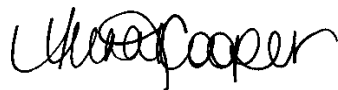
According to the Maryland ALICE Report, nearly 40% of Maryland households struggle to afford basic necessities- including housing, despite being employed. These are the families of our teachers, healthcare providers, retail employees, and service industry professionals who earn above the federal poverty 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".

Auna Cooper, LMSW

Associate Vice President of Housing

SPONSOR TESTIMONY - HB0503_ Housing for Jobs Act.p

Uploaded by: Brad Fallon

Position: FAV



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DATE: 3/4/2025

BILL NO.: House Bill 503

TITLE: Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing For Jobs Act)

COMMITTEE: House Environment and Transportation Committee

SPONSOR TESTIMONY

Description of Bill:

House Bill 503 – the Housing for Jobs Act – requires DHCD and the Maryland Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps based on jobs-to-housing ratios and apportion those housing infrastructure gaps to counties and municipalities based on their share of regional jobs. Local jurisdictions in regions with a housing-to-jobs ratio greater than 1.5 have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications, with limited enumerated justifications for denial. The bill also allows a proponent of a housing development project to bring an action in Circuit Court to enforce the provisions of the Act.

Background and Analysis:

Over the last decade, housing costs nationwide have risen at a rate far outpacing inflation and wages. That issue is particularly acute in Maryland, where 1 in 3 families pay more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs. Maryland ranks [43rd out of 50 states](#) in housing affordability. Unaffordable housing costs drive migration out of the state: In 2022 alone, nearly 40,000 Marylanders aged 17-34 left the state, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. [Polling](#) from the Maryland Association of Realtors has shown that nearly half of younger renters are considering leaving Maryland for a state with lower housing costs, amidst broad consensus among Maryland voters that housing costs are too high.

Housing costs have also contributed to economic stagnation in the state, as businesses find it difficult to attract workers when even middle-class salaries do not allow families to obtain quality housing a reasonable distance from work, schools, and other opportunities. Maryland’s GDP growth has significantly underperformed nationwide growth since 2017, with construction and real estate among the most-underperforming sectors of the state economy.

The Housing for Jobs Act aims to reduce Maryland’s housing shortage, increase affordability, and stimulate the state economy by addressing these barriers at the local level. It does so in a targeted fashion, only applying to jurisdictions within the state that face a shortage of housing relative to the number of jobs in the jurisdiction.

A key element of the Housing for Jobs Act is the calculation of the housing-to-jobs ratio, and, if applicable, the “housing infrastructure gap” for regions and jurisdictions in Maryland. Under the bill’s provisions, DHCD and the Maryland Department of Planning will identify shortages of housing units by comparing housing stock to the total number of jobs in a region. If there are more than 1.5 jobs per housing unit (a ratio supported by Census data and [past analysis](#)), the region has a shortage, or housing infrastructure gap. That gap is then apportioned to local jurisdictions within that region based on each jurisdiction’s share of regional jobs. The provisions of the Housing for Jobs Act only apply to those local

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jurisdictions that have a housing infrastructure gap. Currently, calculations show that the Baltimore and Washington, D.C. regions have significant housing infrastructure gaps (see below).

County	Jobs	% Share Regional Jobs	Current Housing Units	Jobs to Housing Ratio	Total Housing Units Needed for <1.5 ratio	Target: New Units Needed
Baltimore Region	<i>1,903,043</i>	-	<i>1,179,056</i>	<i>1.61</i>	<i>1,268,696</i>	<i>89,640</i>
Anne Arundel County	432,915	23%	236,486	-	256,878	20,392
Baltimore County	551,655	29%	351,123	-	377,108	25,985
Carroll County	87,484	5%	66,545	-	70,666	4,121
Harford County	137,752	7%	105,205	-	111,694	6,489
Howard County	245,933	13%	125,818	-	137,402	11,584
Baltimore City	447,304	24%	293,879	-	314,948	21,069
Washington Region	<i>1,409,097</i>	-	<i>879,832</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>939,398</i>	<i>59,566</i>
Frederick County	158,423	11%	108,996	-	115,693	6,697
Montgomery County	741,956	53%	406,850	-	438,214	31,364
Prince George's County	508,718	36%	363,986	-	385,491	21,505
Southern Maryland Region (Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's)	<i>175,474</i>	-	<i>146,484</i>	<i>1.20</i>	<i>116,983</i>	<i>0</i>
Western Maryland Region (Allegany, Garrett, Washington)	<i>140,094</i>	-	<i>115,495</i>	<i>1.21</i>	<i>93,396</i>	<i>0</i>
Upper Eastern Shore Region (Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot)	<i>131,777</i>	-	<i>109,193</i>	<i>1.21</i>	<i>87,851</i>	<i>0</i>
Lower Eastern Shore Region (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester)	<i>127,406</i>	-	<i>127,806</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>84,937</i>	<i>0</i>
Statewide						149,206

Data sources: Jobs, [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) (2022); Housing units, [American Community Survey estimates](#) (2022)



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Local jurisdictions with a housing infrastructure gap will have an affirmative obligation to approve new housing development projects unless there is a specific reason for denial that outweighs the need for housing. These eligible reasons for denial include insufficient school capacity, necessity for compliance with state or federal law, specific adverse impact to the health and safety of residents, and failure to comply with objective development standards at the time of application. Local jurisdictions subject to the Act are thus not precluded from denying any project, but must cite one of the enumerated reasons for doing so – and are required to base a denial on local rules in effect at the time the application is submitted. Builders have the right to appeal to Circuit Court when a denial is made in violation of these provisions.

Jurisdictions may reduce their housing infrastructure gaps – and, if the gap is reduced to zero, no longer be subject to the Housing for Jobs Act – by adding new housing units, with enhanced reductions, or “bonuses” for affordable housing units built, and units built within 0.75 miles of a passenger rail station. These bonuses incentivize local jurisdictions to produce affordable housing and encourage transit-oriented development, which has the benefit of reducing traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Housing for Jobs Act will increase housing affordability and boost the economy in Maryland in a number of ways: First, the requirement for adherence to objective development standards in place at the time of application will benefit developers of affordable housing, who are least able to afford uncertainty and development changes when consistent standards are not enforced. State dollars used to finance affordable housing will go further with the uncertainty inherent in opaque and discretionary review processes removed. Second, incentivizing housing construction where it is most needed to support jobs and economic growth will give Marylanders more housing options near the places where they work and go to school, and make the state a more attractive destination for workers, and, in turn, out-of-state companies that currently may choose to set up shop in neighboring states where workforce housing is more affordable.

States that have adopted similar reforms, such as Massachusetts and New Jersey, have seen increases of thousands of housing units produced per year above the baseline level. Maryland, too, can boost housing production, increase affordability, and spur economic growth by enacting the Housing for Jobs Act. This has no costs to Maryland taxpayers, while housing construction generates meaningful additional revenues for the state and local governments. Housing construction generates tax revenues for the State through the transfer tax on the sale of property, sales tax on construction materials, income tax on construction labor and legal, financial and insurance labor, and property tax revenue on the completed construction. The average Maryland state tax revenue per one unit of housing built is approximately \$7,837. Local governments also generate tax revenue from housing construction through transfer taxes, income taxes, property taxes, and through permitting, impact and inspection fees. The average local government tax revenue per one unit of housing built is approximately \$10,838. Using analysis based on pre-2008 recession building permit activity in Maryland, and on analyses of impacts of similar reforms in other states, the fiscal impact to the state from the Housing for Jobs Act is estimated as follows:

	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
% Increase in permitting activity	5%	20%	25%	30%	35%
# of Incremental Annual New Units	710	2,841	3,551	4,261	4,971

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Incremental state tax revenue	5,676,554	23,160,338	29,529,431	36,144,024	43,011,389
Incremental local tax revenue	7,850,669	32,030,729	40,839,180	49,987,156	59,484,715

In addition to direct revenues from housing construction, the Housing for Jobs Act is anticipated to generate income tax revenues through retaining Maryland's existing domestic population. According to U.S. Census data, 17-34 year olds are driving domestic outmigration from the state, with approximately 39,757 individuals leaving annually. This represents approximately \$78.6M in lost annual income tax revenue to the state

DHCD Position

The Moore-Miller Administration respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 503.

CSG Testimony HB 503 Housing for Jobs Act.pdf

Uploaded by: Carrie Kisicki

Position: FAV

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Delegate Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
House Office Building, Room 250
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**HB503 – Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act) —
Support**

Carrie Kisicki, Montgomery County Advocacy Manager

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Carrie Kisicki, and I am the Montgomery County Advocacy Manager for the Coalition for Smarter Growth. We advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the metro D.C. region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

Location matters when we build new housing. The Housing for Jobs Act will help to produce more of the homes Maryland needs in strategic locations tied to our transit network, our environmental health, and our economic success.

This approach continues Maryland's long history of leadership on smart growth—the principle that we can protect our environment, support more inclusive communities and a thriving economy, and give people access to opportunity by locating homes in places with access to jobs, sustainable transportation, and other amenities.

The Housing for Jobs Act encourages sustainability and location efficiency by granting 1.5 units towards housing production targets for each home located within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of a rail station.

It also supports more inclusive communities by granting 1.5 units toward housing production targets for each home deed-restricted to households earning 60% or below AMI for at least 40 years.

For these reasons, **we strongly urge you to support HB 503**. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Carrie Kisicki
Montgomery County Advocacy Manager

HB0503_Land_Use_-_Regional_Housing_Infrastructure_

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0503

Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Bill Sponsor: Speaker Jones

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0503 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Governor Wes Moore identified housing as a priority last year, with a shortage of 96,000 units in Maryland. This crisis has left over 5,000 people, including 2,000 families, unhoused. The regional disparity between the supply of suitable housing and demand is unacceptable to MLC members.

HB0503 tackles the regional housing infrastructure gap, measured by the jobs-to-housing ratio. The Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning are required to calculate these gaps by counties and municipalities. The bill empowers local jurisdictions to reduce gaps by expediting housing project approvals and mandates timely approvals while prohibiting unjustifiable denials.

For residents, the Housing for Jobs Act ensures that all Marylanders have access to safe, affordable housing. Closing these gaps promotes social stability, economic growth, and well-being.

For the state, addressing regional disparities means greater economic growth across the state by attracting businesses and workers. The bill promotes efficient housing project approvals, alleviating shortages, and reducing the burden on local governments.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition wholeheartedly supports this bill and recommends a FAVORABLE report in committee.

IL Written Testimony - HB 503 - Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Kelter

Position: FAV



HB 503: Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Testimony of the Maryland Independent Living Network

SUPPORT

House Environment and Transportation Committee, March 4, 2025

The Maryland Independent Living Network is a coalition of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council and the seven Maryland-based Centers for Independent Living (CIL). CILs are created by federal law. CILs work to enhance the civil rights and quality of services for people with disabilities. There are seven CILs located throughout Maryland, operated by and for people with disabilities. CILs provide Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services to individuals with disabilities in their communities.

The Independent Living Network submits this written testimony in **support** of HB 503.

HB 503 requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps. Furthermore, HB 503 provides for the apportionment of regional housing infrastructure gaps to counties and incorporated municipalities and authorizes local jurisdictions to reduce local housing infrastructure gaps. Additionally, HB 503 establishes that local jurisdictions have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications.

HB 503 builds on the gubernatorial-sponsored package of housing bills enacted in 2024. HB 503 encourages the production of more housing near areas where jobs are located.

The bill requires the Department of Housing & Community Development and the Department of Planning to publish a jobs-housing ratio that describes how many jobs a community has relative to the number of homes it has. It is assumed that most households have one or two wage-earners. Research shows that people willing to work can't find housing near where they work. As a consequence, demand increases home prices and people are forced into long commutes. Accordingly, Maryland's goal is to get each region of the state to about 1.5 jobs per house.

Local jurisdictions would retain the ability to reject housing development in certain circumstances. Local jurisdictions would be required to tell homebuilders why they're being denied; homebuilders could then appeal that decision in Circuit Court.

HB 503 doesn't change local zoning or permitting procedures, but it is assumed that local jurisdictions will take steps to speed up the processing of new housing.

California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia have set goals and targets for housing production. Additionally, Virginia is considering a similar bill after an unsuccessful attempt last year.

The Maryland Independent Living Network recognizes the challenges of creating more housing, especially affordable and accessible housing. People with disabilities and older Marylanders must be involved in the development of new housing options so that affordability and accessibility are engrained in the process.

The Maryland Independent Living Network appreciates the consideration of these comments.

The Maryland Independent Living Network strongly **supports** HB 503 and urges a **favorable** report.

Contact Information:

Chris Kelter, Executive Director
Accessible Resources for Independence
443-713-3914
ckelter@arinow.org

Danielle Bustos, MDYLF Coordinator
Independence Now
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dbustos@innow.org

CDN HB 503 FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Claudia Wilson Randall

Position: FAV



Testimony HB 503
Environment and Transportation Committee
March 4, 2025
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Korman and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland’s community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland’s urban, suburban and rural communities.

HB 503 - Requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps and authorizes local jurisdictions to reduce local housing infrastructure gaps. It further emphasizes local governments affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications.

Ensuring that all families live in affordable, stable homes will improve community health outcomes, thereby reducing health care and education costs. Housing is an urgent priority for economic growth. Building a firm foundation for stable homes begins with policies that increase the production of housing affordable to households making less than \$65,000 per year. Given the health, educational, and cost implications of families living in unstable homes, there is an urgent need to increase supply of affordable homes throughout the state.

According to [Out of Reach 2024](#), an annual report published by the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#) (NLIHC) in Maryland the average fair market rent for a two-bedroom rental home was \$1,909, while in Baltimore County it was \$1,943. The report illuminates the difference between what people need to earn and rent, and shows just how out of reach affordable rental homes are for millions of low-wage workers and other families. The report calculates a “Housing Wage” – an estimate of the hourly wage full-time workers must earn to afford a rental home at fair market rent without spending more than 30 percent of their incomes.

To afford this level of rent and utilities — without paying more than 30% of income on housing — a Baltimore County household must earn \$77,720 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of \$37.37 – or

more than double the state minimum wage of \$15/hour. For the state, that hourly Housing Wage is \$36.70.

The Housing for Jobs Act directly addresses the primary driver of unaffordability and financial insecurity in the state: housing costs. This is of particular concern to young people who are moving out of the state. Over the last decade, housing costs have far outpaced inflation and wages. These numbers also impact the costs for older adults who are dependent on social security income and benefits.

HB 503 respects the autonomy of Maryland's counties, empowering local governments to enter into agreements that meet their specific housing needs. The bill strikes a thoughtful balance between incentivizing local government, property developers and ensuring access to affordable housing for urban, suburban and rural areas of the state.

Our members need streamlined zoning and permitting processes and relief from rising construction and insurance costs. This bill begins by aligning interests for population centers of the state.

We urge a favorable report for House Bill 503.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director

GGWash Comments on HB 503, the Housing for Jobs Ac

Uploaded by: Dan Reed

Position: FAV



Chair Marc Korman
and Members, Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 4, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Regional Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in land use, transportation, and housing throughout Greater Washington. **GGWash strongly supports House Bill 503, the Housing for Jobs Act**, and we continue to applaud Governor Moore and Secretary Day’s leadership on this important issue.


As has been said countless times this session, Maryland has a housing crisis. Estimates show the state is short as many as 150,000 homes, resulting in rising prices and significant challenges for employers as their workers can’t afford to live here¹. Meanwhile, we’re facing a \$3 billion budget shortfall, which is expected to double by 2030². These problems are closely related: if we can build more homes for more budgets, more people will be able to come here and stay here, meaning more job growth and more tax revenue.

The Housing for Jobs Act is a key part of the solution, as it would direct housing production to the places where it’s most needed—communities where there aren’t enough homes for available jobs. It will set consistent criteria for how local governments should review development approvals, and give builders a “private right of action” if their applications are unfairly denied.

We recently commissioned a poll of 820 Marylanders and found strong support for the Housing for Jobs Act: 76% support producing more homes in areas where there are more job opportunities than available housing supply, 69% support reducing the amount of time it takes for housing projects to go through permitting; and 79% support setting clear and objective criteria for development approvals.

¹ <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/maryland-legislators-new-bills-keep-up-housing-demand/63423726>

² <https://marylandmatters.org/2025/01/03/everything-on-the-table-as-moore-lawmakers-seek-budget-solutions/>

The Washington, DC region is great  and it can be greater.



This is the second time we've done a statewide housing poll, and each time the results are clear: Marylanders are fed up with high housing costs, they want the state to do something about it, and they're open to solutions. Now it's time for the General Assembly to act and ensure that all Marylanders—both the ones who are here, and the ones who want to come here—can put down roots here. We ask the Environment and Transportation Committee for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and the last name "Reed" clearly distinguishable.

Dan Reed
Regional Policy Director

Councilmember Luedtke HB 503 Pro.pdf

Uploaded by: Dawn Luedtke

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 503, Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Dear Chair Korman,

I urge the Committee to support Senate Bill 430, *Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)*, which would require the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps; provide for the apportionment of regional housing infrastructure gaps to counties and incorporated municipalities; authorize local jurisdictions to reduce local housing infrastructure gaps; and establish that local jurisdictions have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications.

An unbalanced jobs-housing ratio results in high housing costs and long commutes, decreasing our residents' quality of life and running counter to our climate commitments. By encouraging development near job centers, this legislation aims to right-size the jobs-housing ratio. The bill would accomplish this by requiring Maryland to set a statewide housing goal each year, goals for six different regions across the state, and goals for each county within those regions. Several other locations across the country - including California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia - already set targets for housing production.

This legislation tackles the housing crisis in a targeted and strategic manner. Our residents are calling on us to do so. The latest polling from the Maryland Association of Realtors finds that across the State and across age groups, Marylanders report that the cost of buying and renting a home is too expensive. A large and growing majority feel strained by housing costs and almost one-third have considered leaving Maryland because of the cost of housing. This bill is an important step we must take to right the ship.

Very truly yours,

Dawn Luedtke
Montgomery County Councilmember
District 7

cc: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

HB503 Bridges to Housing Stability FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Brandon

Position: FAV



House Bill 503 Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 4, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

Bridges to Housing Stability is a nonprofit organization serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Howard County, MD. We appreciate this opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 503.

HB503 would reduce Maryland's housing shortage by setting goals for new housing production. This bill would require the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and Department of Planning to determine regional housing infrastructure gaps and provide clear standards under which local jurisdictions can deny new housing.

Maryland's significant housing shortage is driving housing costs higher and making Maryland unaffordable for current and prospective residents. At present, the Washington, DC Region has a shortage of nearly 60,000 homes and the Baltimore Region has a shortage of nearly 90,000 homes, totaling a shortage of nearly 150,000 of homes in just 8 counties and Baltimore City to maintain an average of 1.5 jobs per available housing unit.¹

Over the past 10 years, median rents have increased 36% and median home prices have increased nearly 48%, resulting in Maryland ranking 43rd in housing affordability and 9th in total cost of living. With these increases, 1 in 3 families in Maryland have become cost-burdened by housing and 53% of renters are paying over 30% of their income on rent. As a result, outmigration is being led by young Marylanders, with nearly 40,000 leaving the state in 2022 alone and 44% of younger renters considering leaving Maryland due to housing costs.¹

When homelessness rises, the economy suffers. Maryland's economy has been stagnant since 2017, with only 1.6% GDP total growth compared to the national 13.9%. Employment growth has only increased 1% (US Average: 7.4%), and personal income per capita has only grown by 1.2% (US Average: 9.5%). On average, only 33 workers are available for every 100 jobs. As a result, many businesses are unable to grow or even operate at full capacity.¹

Bridges to Housing Stability, Inc.

9520 Berger Rd., Suite 311, Columbia, MD 21046

Phone (410) 312-5760 Fax (410) 312-5765

www.Bridges2HS.org



While HB503 will require the creation of new housing in jurisdictions with a housing infrastructure gap, it also seeks to mitigate concerns that new growth will negatively impact public facilities – a concern shared by many Howard County residents. New housing projects are still able to be denied if the development would have an adverse impact on the health and safety of its residents, would overcrowd schools, overwork water and sewer facilities, and a variety of other compliance concerns.¹

HB503 will drive economic growth while promoting housing production in regions that have suffered. By establishing a process to measure housing gaps based on a ratio of jobs to housing units and increase housing production where needed, Maryland can improve its economic competitiveness and create new revenue opportunities to drive growth.

For these reasons, Bridges to Housing Stability supports HB503 and urges a favorable report.

¹Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, [Governor Moore's Housing for Jobs Act of 2025](#)

For more information, please contact Emily Brandon at (410) 312-5760 ext. 106

Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership SUPPORT for

Uploaded by: Emily Hovermale

Position: FAV



100 North Charles Street, 2nd floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222
www.brhp.org

March 4, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
250 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership Support for HB 503 – Housing for Jobs Act

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP), thank you for the opportunity to provide support for HB 503, the Housing for Jobs Act.

BRHP is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for low-income families who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods by helping them access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of Housing Choice Vouchers coupled with counseling support for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties.

The Housing for Jobs Act Will Drive Housing Production and Economic Growth

Maryland's economy is being constrained by a critical lack of affordable housing. The Housing for Jobs Act will help address this crisis by streamlining housing development processes, increasing transparency, and making it easier to build affordable homes where they are needed most.

This legislation will boost critically needed affordable housing development by shifting development processes from discretionary to objective, reducing

unnecessary delays and costs and making housing projects—especially affordable and nonprofit-led projects—more feasible. By eliminating opaque and unpredictable review processes, state and local funding can stretch further, ensuring more affordable units are built per dollar spent.

This development is essential for Maryland families and for the Maryland economy. Maryland is one of the most expensive states in the country for housing, with the [National Low Income Housing Coalition's Out of Reach](#) report finding Marylanders have the 9th highest per hour state housing wage, or the wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at the average Fair Market Rent in the state. For many low-income families, rising rents create insurmountable barriers to housing stability. For our program participants who have often waited years to receive assistance, this can result in a struggle to find an available unit within the timeline allotted by the voucher and extended time couch surfing and other destabilizing experiences, such as school attendance challenges for children. Expanding the overall housing supply will increase rental options for these low-income families.

Limiting residential development hurts the entire state by limiting economic growth, displacing workers, depressing the future workforce, and deterring businesses from expanding in Maryland. As the Maryland Comptroller's most recent [State of the Economy Report](#) highlights, a robust affordable housing inventory is pivotal for Maryland's economic prosperity. The report notes, "More affordable housing inventory can boost Maryland's economy by lowering cost of living, thereby attracting and retaining talent." The state should be making all efforts to increase the stock of affordable housing to bolster our stagnant economy and welcome businesses to the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 503. Thank you for your time and commitment to strengthening Maryland's housing and economic future.

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield
Executive Director

Jobs for housing bill 503.pdf

Uploaded by: Greg Cantori

Position: FAV



Written Testimony on House Bill 503
February 27, 2025

Mr. Marc Korman, Chair
Ms. Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Committee Members,

Little Deeds is a proud member of YIMBY Maryland, an active state-wide chapter of YIMBY Action, a national network of people who advocate for abundant, affordable housing and inclusive, sustainable communities across the United States.

Our company, Little Deeds, works daily with those who are housing challenged with accessibility and affordability and do all we can to help them age in place and modify homes for those with disabilities.

Our YIMBY chapter is entirely run by volunteers who are proud Marylanders. We're a mix of long-time residents and newcomers, renters and homeowners, business owners and employees, families and individuals, citizens and immigrants, commuters, bus riders, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Our chapter members, like Little Deeds, are part of YIMBY Maryland because we see friends, family, and coworkers priced out of our area. We want Maryland to have affordable and inclusive communities where people can thrive. We can make Maryland a state with homes for all.

YIMBY Maryland strongly supports the Administration's "Housing for Jobs Act" (HB503).

This legislation will spur much-needed home building for all Marylanders, especially for the 1 in 3 residents who are cost burdened by their rent or mortgage.

The underlying reason for the State's unaffordability crisis is the lack of supply of homes near jobs. Based on 2022 data, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development estimates that the Baltimore Region is almost 90,000 homes short of having what is considered an economically healthy ratio of 1.5 jobs to 1 housing unit.

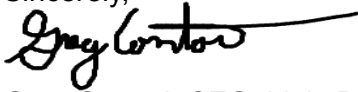
To help meet the State's, our Region's and our County's housing infrastructure challenges, Little Deeds supports HB503's foundational basis that local jurisdictions have an obligation to approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the community's need for housing.

The legislation's enhanced reduction incentive will be of significant value in helping our State build an adequate supply of affordable units to meet the demand for safe, subsidized housing for low and moderate-income households.

The housing generated by this bill will be an important step in creating a more affordable and financially stronger Maryland. Significant numbers of new housing units will help drive down rental and homeownership costs for residents, which should, in turn, generate an expanded economic base of new businesses and jobs.

Little Deeds requests that the Education, Energy and Environment Committee issue a favorable report on HB503.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Cantori". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Greg Cantori, CEO, Little Deeds -

We Do The Little Things That Make A BiG Difference

HB 503_Housing for Jobs Act_FAV (3).pdf

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: FAV



House Bill 503

Position: Favorable

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Date: March 4, 2025

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 503 (HB 503) addresses Maryland's housing shortage by requiring state agencies to identify regional housing infrastructure gaps and apportion them to local jurisdictions based on job concentration. Jurisdictions with housing deficits must take proactive steps to approve housing development projects unless there are clear, justified reasons for denial. The bill also incentivizes the construction of affordable housing by allowing these projects to count more significantly toward closing local housing gaps. Additionally, it establishes a legal framework to challenge improper denials, ensuring that housing supply keeps pace with economic growth and workforce needs.

Maryland's housing shortage presents a significant barrier to economic growth, workforce attraction, and business expansion. With only 33 available workers for every 100 job openings¹, businesses across the state are struggling to fill positions. HB 503 provides a strategic framework to close these gaps by encouraging local jurisdictions to prioritize housing development in areas of greatest need while maintaining reasonable safeguards for community and infrastructure considerations.

By streamlining approvals for workforce housing, incentivizing development near transit hubs, and ensuring that housing policies support economic mobility, this legislation will strengthen Maryland's business climate and improve quality of life for our residents. Employers across the state recognize that housing accessibility is directly linked to talent retention and economic competitiveness.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **favorable report on HB 503**.

HB 503 - SUPP - E&T - Mar 4 - Housing and jobs act

Uploaded by: Henry Bogdan

Position: FAV



marylandnonprofits.org

1500 Union Avenue | Suite 2500 | Baltimore, MD 21211
410.727.6367 | 800.273.6367 | Fax 410.235.2190

March 4, 2025

Testimony on House Bill 503
Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is the statewide association representing nonprofit organizations and institutions in every county in Maryland. We urge you to support House Bill 503 to address the housing availability and affordability crisis that now challenges the health, safety, and financial stability of too many Maryland families, as well as the future economic growth of our state.

The lack of safe and affordable housing impacts too many Maryland families. Housing is more than a shelter issue – it has overlapping and interlocking impacts on health, education, safety, to shopping and food, and access to job opportunities. The home a family owns will normally be their primary financial asset.

Lack of affordable housing for workforce is also a key factor in sustaining and growing our state's economy, on a local, regional, or statewide basis. The Housing for Jobs Act of 2025, HB 503, will focus on:

- Identifying Housing Infrastructure Gaps
- Monitoring Approvals and Denials of Housing Development, and
- Setting and Enforcing Goals for Closing Gaps in Housing Infrastructure

Lack of adequate housing opportunities are retarding our economic growth and workforce development, and creating both physical and economic hardships for struggling families in our state.

We urge you to support House Bill 503.



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.

Testimony HB503-3-4-2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Jackie Eng

Position: FAV

HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY COALITION

Testimony on House Bill 503

March 4, 2025

Mr. Marc Korman, Chair
Ms. Regina Boyce, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Committee members,

The Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition is composed of 44 organizations and over 900 individual members and allies. The Coalition works to achieve community understanding, policy making and regulatory decisions that will lead to an increase in—and equitable access to—Howard County affordable housing.

The Coalition strongly supports the Administration’s “Housing for Jobs Act” (HB 503). This legislation will spur much needed home building for all Marylanders, especially for the 1 in 3 residents who are cost burdened by their rent or mortgage.

The underlying reason for the State’s unaffordability crisis is the lack of supply of homes near jobs. Based on 2022 data, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development estimates that the Baltimore Region is almost 90,000 homes short of having what is considered an economically healthy ratio of 1.5 jobs to 1 housing unit. To help resolve this regional housing infrastructure gap, Howard County will need to produce 11,600 new housing units. To put the magnitude of this production challenge into perspective, in 2023 only about 450 new homes were sold in the County and in 2024 no new multi-family rental units were added.

To help meet the State’s, our Region’s and our County’s housing infrastructure challenges, the Coalition supports HB 503’s foundational basis that local jurisdictions have an obligation to approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the community’s need for housing. The legislation’s enhanced reduction incentive will be of significant value in helping Howard County meet its recently established General Plan target of developing 340 new affordable units per year. We also support the flexibility HB503 provides to local jurisdictions in not requiring zoning law changes and providing exceptions that allow local governments to not approve a proposed housing project—for example, a negative impact on water or sewer facilities or insufficient school capacity.

The housing generated by this bill will be an important step in creating a more affordable and financially stronger Maryland and Howard County. Significant numbers of new housing units will help drive down rental and homeownership costs for residents which should in turn generate an expanded economic base of new businesses and jobs.

The Coalition requests that the Environment and Transportation Committee issue a favorable report on HB 503.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Eng

Jackie Eng, Coalition Coordinator

Cc: Delegate Jen Terrasa and Delegate Natalie Ziegler

Written Testimony on House Bill 503.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessamine Duvall

Position: FAV



Written Testimony on House Bill 503

March 4, 2025

Mr. Marc Korman, Chair
Ms. Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Committee members,

I am the Executive Director of Columbia Housing Center, a Howard County based nonprofit organization with a mission to champion and sustain thriving, integrated neighborhoods in and around Columbia, MD. We offer a variety of housing support programs serving low- and moderate-income households, including an affirmative marketing housing referral service that furthers fair housing, a rent subsidy program for students at Howard Community College, and a program to help voucher holders find homes in Howard County's competitive rental market. We receive requests for housing referrals from about 600 households each year, and we must turn away about 75% of those households because there is no housing available for families earning less than 60% of our Area Median Income.

With a highly-competitive housing market where home prices are rising, plus an apartment vacancy rate of 2.8% for market rate apartments and 0.3% for affordable rental units, Howard County is in desperate need of more housing – especially affordable housing. Therefore, Columbia Housing Center strongly supports the Administration's "Housing for Jobs Act" (HB503). This legislation will spur much needed home building for our county and for all Marylanders, especially for the 1 in 3 residents who are cost burdened by their rent or mortgage.

The underlying reason for the State's unaffordability crisis is the lack of supply of homes near jobs. Based on 2022 data, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development estimates that the Baltimore Region is almost 90,000 homes short of having what is considered an economically healthy ratio of 1.5 jobs to 1 housing unit. To help resolve this regional housing infrastructure gap, Howard County will need to produce 11,600 new housing units. To put the magnitude of this production challenge into perspective, in 2023 only about 450 new homes were sold in the County and no new multi-family rental units were added in 2024.

To help meet the State's, our Region's and our County's housing infrastructure challenges, Columbia Housing Center supports HB503's foundational basis that local jurisdictions have an obligation to approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the community's need for housing. The legislation's enhanced reduction incentive will be of significant value in helping Howard County meet its recently established General Plan target of developing 340 new affordable units per year.

The housing generated by this bill will be an important step in creating a more affordable and financially stronger Howard County and Maryland. Significant numbers of new housing units will help drive down rental and homeownership costs for residents which should, in turn, generate an expanded economic base of new businesses and jobs.

Columbia Housing Center requests that the Education, Energy and Environment Committee issue a favorable report on HB503.

Respectfully Submitted,



Executive Director Columbia Housing Center

Health Care for the Homeless - HB 503 FAV - Housin

Uploaded by: Joanna Diamond

Position: FAV



HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY
FAVORABLE

HB 503 – Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

House Environment and Transportation Committee
March 4, 2025

Health Care for the Homeless supports HB 503, Housing for Jobs Act, which addresses our State’s exorbitant housing costs by creating a streamlined process for the approval of new housing development projects. This bill designs a helpful tool to address our State’s severe housing shortage.

Health Care for the Homeless is a Federally Qualified Community Health Center that has been providing health and housing services to individuals and families who lack safe and stable homes since 1985. Every day, our providers see how the lack of affordable rental housing creates housing instability and exacerbates homelessness.

1 in 3 Maryland families are cost burdened by their monthly rent or mortgage payment, including 53% of Maryland renters who pay more than 30% of their income on rent.¹ In Baltimore, more than half of all Baltimoreans rent housing, and more than half of Baltimore’s renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing and utilities. Housing costs are too high and there is not enough affordable housing.²

In response, Health Care for the Homeless formed a subsidiary non-profit organization known as HCH Real Estate Company, Inc. to increase Baltimore’s affordable housing supply.³ HCH Real Estate Company, Inc. develops affordable and supportive multifamily rental housing in Baltimore. Our projects are designed to be community-centered, environmentally sustainable and deeply affordable. Current affordable housing development efforts in the market, target households with incomes above 50% of the Area Median Income. This leaves people with extremely low incomes to consistently pay more than they can afford—increasing the risk of eviction and homelessness.

The Housing for Jobs Act uses a different approach to addressing our State’s housing costs by identifying areas of the State with “housing infrastructure gaps” and streamlines the process for the development of more housing in those areas. In the bill, “housing infrastructure gaps” calculates shortages of housing units by comparing housing stock to the total number of jobs in the region. If there are more than 1.5 jobs per housing unit, a region has a shortage. Local jurisdictions with a

¹[United States Census Bureau](#)

² See also National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach 2024*, <https://nlihc.org/oor>, noting that Maryland has the 9th highest housing wage in the country, requiring a wage of \$36.70/hour in order to afford a 2-bedroom rental home. That means a person needs to work 98 hours/week at minimum wage in order to afford a 2-bedroom rental home.

³ <https://hchreco.org/>. Learn about some of our projects at <https://www.hchmd.org/news/lets-build-future-without-homelessness>.

housing infrastructure gap have an obligation to approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the community's need for housing. Each standard housing unit built will reduce the regional housing gap on a one-to-one basis. The bill also includes enhanced reductions in the regional housing gap calculations for affordable housing development. There will be a 1.5 unit reduction for every 1 affordable housing unit built.

Everyone deserves a home they can afford in a stable and healthy community. The Housing for Jobs Act is a thoughtful approach to addressing Maryland's unaffordable housing costs and we urge a favorable report.

Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland's leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We deliver medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, housing support services, and housing for over 11,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Our Vision: Everyone is healthy and has a safe home in a just and respectful community.

Our Mission: We work to end homelessness through racially equitable health care, housing and advocacy in partnership with those of us who have experienced it.

For more information, visit www.hchmd.org.

HB0503_FAV_Maryland Just Power Alliance.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Wenger

Position: FAV



Support the Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503)

Dear Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee,

We are the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#), a coalition of 3 non-partisan community power organizations: [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) (ACT), [Action in Montgomery](#) (AIM), and [People Acting Together in Howard](#) (PATH), representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize with people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to build power for policies that make our communities more fair and livable for everyone. We are asking you to support the Governor's Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503) when it is considered by the Environment & Transportation Committee.

Maryland has a shortage of 150,000 homes, which is driving up the cost of housing and creating a housing cost burden for a high percentage of our communities. Many young adults, seniors, essential workers, people of color, and people with disabilities lack affordable, quality housing options because of a lack of supply. We are committed to addressing the housing crisis through supply and other strategies, so that everyone can have a safe, healthy home they can afford.

We are counting on you to pass a strong version of this bill out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB0503_FAV_Maryland Just Power Alliance.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Wenger

Position: FAV



Support the Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503)

Dear Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee,

We are the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#), a coalition of 3 non-partisan community power organizations: [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) (ACT), [Action in Montgomery](#) (AIM), and [People Acting Together in Howard](#) (PATH), representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize with people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to build power for policies that make our communities more fair and livable for everyone. We are asking you to support the Governor's Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503) when it is considered by the Environment & Transportation Committee.

Maryland has a shortage of 150,000 homes, which is driving up the cost of housing and creating a housing cost burden for a high percentage of our communities. Many young adults, seniors, essential workers, people of color, and people with disabilities lack affordable, quality housing options because of a lack of supply. We are committed to addressing the housing crisis through supply and other strategies, so that everyone can have a safe, healthy home they can afford.

In his book, [The Affordable City](#), urban planner and policy expert Shane Phillips states that the foundation of affordable communities is a healthy balance of supply, subsidy, and stability. Subsidy for affordable housing and stability for renters are more commonly understood as tactics for affordability. Yet, without enough housing supply we don't have enough homes for everyone and this means:

"Rents and home prices rise as a result of scarcity, the cost of construction balloons as land and labor grow more expensive, landlords gain leverage over renters (and sellers over buyers), and poorer tenants are replaced by higher-income households, with the less fortunate pushed to areas with fewer amenities and limited access to jobs, education, and community."

Lack of supply is not only a problem for the efficiency of our housing market and for economic development, but more crucially it creates the conditions for vulnerable renters and homebuyers to be discriminated against or overcharged by substandard housing options.

The values from our many faith traditions compel us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We must ensure that there are enough homes in all our communities for our neighbors to call home. We are counting on you to pass a strong version of this bill out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB0503_Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Leila Kohler-Frueh

Position: FAV

Testimony
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
HB0503
Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
Position: Support
FEBRUARY 28, 2025

Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake is the leading provider of affordable homeownership opportunities in Central Maryland. Since our founding 43 years ago, we have built or renovated over 800 homes in 26 communities across Baltimore City and Baltimore, Anne Arundel and Howard counties. This year, we are in active construction or pre-development in several neighborhoods in Baltimore, as well as on projects in Severn and Colombia. These include both new construction and intensive rehabilitation of long-vacant homes.

We support the goals of the Housing for Jobs Act, recognizing that it brings strategic attention and goals for removing obstacles for working individuals and families to have home be nearer to work, a key factor in overall quality of life. We applaud the chance to have more homeownership units in these efforts, and invite the chance for those to include homeownership affordability.

Increasing housing supply is a key priority for the state, and a key concern for Habitat for Humanity across its network. Please support this proposal to increase housing supply in key areas within the State.

Sincerely,

Leila Kohler-Frueh

HB503_MDSierra_FAV_3-4.docx (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Lindsey Mendelson

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 503, Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 4, 2025

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB 503. The Housing for Jobs Act would create certain requirements for localities to achieve a jobs-to-housing ratio of less than 1.5. Localities would be obliged to approve development applications with new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the need for housing. We are glad to see that localities are permitted to deny projects proposed in conservation areas or on agricultural land and encouraged to approve projects near rail stations.

Housing is too expensive almost everywhere across the state and is especially too expensive in places that are highly desirable due to their access to jobs and amenities. As Sierra Club's Urban Infill Guidance states, how we build cities and towns has a profound effect on the causes and impacts of climate change.¹ An essential strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is supporting housing growth near job centers. When someone lives close to where they work, they have a shorter commute and are also more likely to use sustainable transportation options, such as public transit, biking, or walking.

To address this goal, we believe in transit-oriented development to help boost transit ridership and in creating inclusive communities to promote a more sustainable, fair future. Because of this, we support the provision in HB 503 that would enable an affordable home or a home within three-quarters of a mile of a rail station to count as 1.5 homes towards the local housing infrastructure gap. This will encourage localities to move forward projects near rail stations and those with homes that are affordable to moderate-income households.

Climate change, housing, land use, affordability, equity, economic development, and transportation are all inextricably entwined. Legislation like this is the right path forward to meet the state's goals on all of these important issues in alignment with voters' concerns. Nearly a quarter of voters believe housing affordability is the biggest problem facing the state, according to a January 2025 poll conducted by the Washington Post and the University of Maryland.² As such, it is time for the state to take bold action and try new strategies. Therefore, we urge you to submit a favorite report for HB 503.

Jane Lyons-Raeder
Chair, Transportation Committee
janelyons@gmail.com

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

¹ https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/Infill%20Policy_5.18.2019.pdf

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/01/31/maryland-poll-moore-budget-proposals/>

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

HB503 Housing for Jobs favorable testimony CHAI.pd

Uploaded by: Lisa Budlow

Position: FAV

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Lisa K. Budlow
Chief Executive Officer



Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: Favorable

March 4, 2025

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair and Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee:

I write today to urge a **favorable** report on HB503, the Housing for Jobs Act, on behalf of CHAI and LeadingAge Maryland. CHAI is a community-based nonprofit agency located in northwest Baltimore City and County. Over four decades of service, we have developed over 1,700 units of affordable housing primarily serving adults 62+. We also provide community-based housing services and programs that promote social connection and engagement among our older neighbors. CHAI is an active member of LeadingAge Maryland, which unites nonprofit providers of aging services, including affordable housing communities and providers of housing with services.

CHAI's dual mission of strengthening both communities themselves and the neighbors who live there leads us to focus on lifting up both people and place. The Housing for Jobs Act of 2025 likewise will serve to strengthen both Maryland neighborhoods and the Marylanders who live in them. Housing provides the platform for people to pursue their life goals – whether to find jobs, improve their health, make community connections and so on – success in the pursuit of these goals depends on having a stable place to live. When there is insufficient attainable housing, people have two choices – they remain with uncertainty, compromising their other personal goals, or they move elsewhere to find a home that works for them to build their lives. If we want to retain and grow our population and support Marylanders in achieving quality of life, we must ensure an adequate supply of housing. Further, truly strong communities must offer various types of housing that meet the needs of diverse community members at every age and stage, each income level, and all circumstances they find themselves in. No one type – rental, homeownership, condo, townhouse or single-family home – is the answer. We must offer choice. And to do so, we must enact policy that promotes housing production.

As an affordable housing developer, it is clear to CHAI that the Housing for Jobs Act will improve upon current processes and facilitate the building of more homes. The industry has become increasingly complex, with many layers of funding, multiple partners, and significant regulatory requirements. Navigating this complexity to achieve affordable housing production is challenging, and legislation that simplifies the process is most welcome.



CHAI: Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. 5809 Park Heights Avenue • Baltimore, Maryland
21215 • 410-500-5300 • Fax: 410-466-1996 chaibaltimore.org

CHAI is an agency of The Associated



We believe the Housing for Jobs Act will do just that. It will establish objective standards for approval of new projects, which will reduce uncertainty and offer clarity for developers on whether a proposed project will comply. Upon review of open and transparent qualifications, developers will know whether their project can be approved *before* they spend time and in CHAI's case, precious nonprofit resources, on the project. This will reduce waste of time and money in an already complex field and allow all interested parties to be on the same page about development in their neighborhoods.

We urge your support on HB503, the Housing for Jobs Act.

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa K. Budlow
Chief Executive Officer



HB 503 - Housing for Jobs - FAV - REALTORS.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa May

Position: FAV



**House Bill 503 – Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
Position: Support**

Maryland REALTORS® strongly supports efforts to close our 150,000-unit housing shortage, including bills such as HB 503.

Year after year, Maryland residents have grown more concerned over housing shortages and affordability. Our 2025 State of Housing Poll revealed that Marylanders listed **housing affordability as the biggest issue facing the state**.

This has direct impacts on the state’s workforce and economic success:

- **75%** said there was **too little housing for young professionals**
- **66%** said there was **too little housing for those with moderate incomes**
- **42%** of young voters have considered **leaving our state** because of housing costs, and
- **91%** say that **having a full-time job** and still not being able to afford a home is a problem.

Those are the voices of Maryland’s current and future workforce sounding the alarm that our current practices are not working for them.

What’s more, they don’t believe that their government representatives are listening to this concern or taking appropriate action to address it. Over 70% say that government officials at the state and local levels are doing just a fair or poor job on housing supply, compared to only 20% who rate government efforts as excellent or good.

Housing is necessary infrastructure that supports our workers and our local businesses. If we cannot house our workforce, we risk losing them to other states. If that happens, we will also lose the backbone of Maryland’s economy.

We thank Governor Moore and DHCD for their continued efforts to address our housing crisis. Maryland REALTORS® urges your support of HB 503.

**For more information contact
lisa.may@mdrealtor.org or christa.mcgee@mdrealtor.org**

CLS Support for HB0503 - Housing for Jobs Act.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa Sarro

Position: FAV



Executive Director
Jessica A. Quincosa, Esq.

Deputy Director
Kayla Williams-Campbell, Esq.

Director of Litigation and Advocacy
Lisa Sarro, Esq.

Director of Operations
Claudia V. Aguirre

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Tangi Turner, Esq.
Riana Yaman, Esq.

Equal Justice Works Fellows
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Emory Cole II, Esq.
Kency Nittler, Esq.

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Stacey Palmer
Micaela Ramos
Abel Reyes
Glenda Soto
Alejandra Sorto
Samir Vasquez Romero
Karen Zayas

HB0503

Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Environment & Transportation Committee Hearing March 4, 2025

Position: FAVORABLE

To the Honorable Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

Community Legal Services (CLS) is a nonprofit legal services provider dedicated to ensuring equitable access to justice and due process of law for Maryland’s most under-represented populations. We strive to support, protect, and advocate for the human rights of all individuals and families. We urge the Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on this critical legislation, which will expand housing opportunities, increase job growth in our community, and stimulate the local economy.

Maryland Must Be Proactive to Increase the Housing Supply in Areas Where There Are Available Jobs.

As a provider of free legal services for Maryland’s most vulnerable individuals and families, we spend most of our time in court, providing legal representation to protect the rights of tenants and homeowners. We consider it our mission to prevent evictions and maintain housing stability. It’s what we do every single day. However, **the populations we serve need more than we can provide through legal representation. They need homes. They need housing options they can afford in the communities where jobs are available and where they want to live with their families.** For far too many Maryland residents, housing options simply do not exist. By removing some of the barriers to development of housing in job-friendly areas, the Housing for Jobs Act will increase housing options for all, including low- and moderate-income households.

The Housing for Jobs Act Will Expand Affordable Housing Options.

Maryland is facing a severe housing shortage, contributing to rising rental costs and displacement, particularly for working families, seniors, and individuals with limited incomes. Expanding housing options, as HB0503 facilitates, is a necessary step toward addressing this crisis. While the Housing for Jobs Act does not mandate the inclusion of income-based or “affordable” rental units in new developments, studies by the National Bureau of Economic Research and others

show that adding housing at all price points helps improve affordability by easing competition for existing lower-cost units and preventing rent hikes that disproportionately impact low-income families. Further, [comprehensive research](#) looking at a compilation of studies confirms that increasing supply through policies that enable more housing production leads to greater affordability over time. By targeting areas that need more housing to meet the needs of the job market, this legislation will help alleviate pressure on the existing rental market in areas where jobs are plentiful, which in turn benefits lower-income households by increasing the availability of affordable housing with easy geographical access to jobs.

Finally, developments still must satisfy local community laws that govern the quality and quantity of affordable housing that must be built under the Housing for Jobs Act. For example, all local moderately priced dwelling unit (MPDU) and other inclusionary housing ordinances will still apply in counties where they have been (or will be) enacted, so we anticipate new affordable housing will be included in developments under this Act, despite the Act itself being silent on affordable housing.

The Housing for Jobs Act Will Generate New Job Opportunities.

Housing development generates jobs. The Center for Housing Policy and other prominent housing organizations report that the implementation of housing initiatives create new career pathways both during construction and through new consumer spending. In fact, the National Association of Home Builders estimates that building 1,000 average single-family homes creates 2,900 full-time jobs, and building 1,000 rental apartments results in 1,250 jobs. New job opportunities are broad and wide-ranging, from new employment positions in lumber, concrete, and heating, to new professional openings in architecture, engineering, real estate, and the law.

According to the Maryland Manual On-line, more than 100,000 people are unemployed in Maryland and roughly 579,500 Marylanders live below the poverty line. By facilitating the creation of new jobs, the Housing for Jobs Act will help uplift these Marylanders into newer and better employment pathways. This is a key factor in CLS's support for the Housing for Jobs Act.

The Housing for Jobs Act Will Stimulate the Local Economy.

Housing Development Stimulates Local Economies. In addition to creating new jobs, the Housing for Jobs Act will benefit local economies by increasing tax and revenue streams. Consumer spending associated with housing development contributes to the expansion of local economies on top of the additional revenue received from increases in taxes and fees. Studies show that building 1,000 average single-family homes would generate approximately \$110 million in taxes and fees which local communities could use to fund essential services such as

police, firefighters, and schools. Similarly, 1,000 new rental apartments would produce \$55.91 million in taxes and revenue. Furthermore, a boost to the local population, on top of costs associated with transforming new dwellings into homes, results in increased consumer spending when new housing is created. This can be transformative and permanently uplifting for entire communities. With consumers' legitimate concerns that higher inflation and economic turmoil are lurking around the corner, there is no better time than now to pass the Housing for Jobs Act. By easing the total number of requirements they must satisfy, developers will build more housing which will stimulate the local economy long after these housing initiatives are completed. (Among other references, see: [Center for Housing Policy](#), and [National Association of Homebuilders](#).)

Conclusion

CLS strongly urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0503. The Housing for Jobs Act is an essential component of what must, of necessity, be a multi-faceted approach to dealing with Maryland's housing crisis. Removing barriers to housing development in job-abundant areas will set in motion a chain of events that includes improved housing supply, increased job opportunities, and improved local economies, all of which will benefit the communities we serve. In addition to increasing the housing supply where it is most needed, the Act will serve as a vital tool in our State's efforts to ensure businesses have workers and people can afford to live where they work.

Please feel free to reach out to Jessica Quincosa, Executive Director, or Lisa Sarro, Director of Litigation & Advocacy, with any questions at quincosa@clspgc.org, and sarro@clspgc.org, respectively.

HB 503_Testimony in support.pdf

Uploaded by: Lois Mikkila

Position: FAV

House Environment & Transportation Committee
February 28, 2025

House Bill 503
Housing For Jobs Act

Support

The Association of Community Services (ACS) of Howard County, a 501c3 nonprofit, is a membership organization of seventy-seven nonprofit agencies in our community. Our members provide critical services ranging from housing to food assistance, legal services, mentoring, transportation, elder care, and more.

ACS supports House Bill 503, which will spur much needed home building for all Marylanders. The lack of affordable housing, driven by insufficient supply, has long been an issue in Howard County. According to the MD Department of Housing and Community Development, Howard County needs 11,600 new housing units to address the housing gap in our region!

The lack of affordable housing is significantly contributing to the challenge nonprofits are struggling with to recruit and retain sufficient workers to provide the essential services our community relies upon. Potential workers face the choice of high housing costs here, or the cost (in time and money) of a long commute from a more affordable county. Many decide against either option, and look for jobs closer to where they can live affordably. A substantial increase of new housing units will help drive down rental and homeownership costs, making it easier for workers to afford to live in Howard County.

Howard County depends on nonprofits to deliver a wide range of essential services. Please support this bill to help nonprofits hire the workers they need to do so.

ACS strongly urges a favorable report on HB503.

Submitted by,

Lois K Mikkila

Lois K Mikkila
Executive Director
Association of Community Services of Howard County
lois.mikkila@acshoco.org
443-518-7701

MBIA Letter of Support HB 503.pdf

Uploaded by: Lori Graf

Position: FAV

February 27, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 503 Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Dear Chairman Korman:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **HB 503 Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)**. MBIA supports the act in its current version.

The Housing for Jobs act requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to publish the jobs-to-housing ratio in every local jurisdiction. Our state is in a housing shortage of nearly 100,000 units, and a lack of adequate supply has led to a sharp increase in the price of homes. According to the National Association of Homebuilders, 25% of Marylanders spend more than 50% of their income on rent and other housing related expenses. Recently, local jurisdictions have passed Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances (APFO) and other measures to restrict the production of more housing units. This bill will require those jurisdictions to be a part of the solution not the problem. Maintaining a healthy 1.5 jobs-to-housing unit ratio will provide Maryland residents with expanded housing availability among all income levels and give them a chance to live close to where they work. We are also in favor of making it easier to develop units in transit-oriented areas, which aligns with the goals of the Moore Administration.

While MBIA is in support of passing this bill, we would like to offer suggestions to strengthen the bill even more. Most importantly, there needs to be an enforcement mechanism in place if local jurisdictions fail to meet their housing goals, and the bill should clarify which agency has the authority to enforce compliance.

More clarity is needed on the process for denied projects. Each local jurisdiction has their own board of appeals process, and it is unclear if the Circuit Court remedy proposed would now bypass local processes. We would also like to point out that a developer lawsuit in Circuit Court on its own is not an ideal remedy for denied projects. Lawsuits in Circuit Court are costly and lengthy in nature. A better solution would be to add language to the bill that provides an administrative process through the Department of Housing and Community Development or a different government panel. This would reduce costs and put the appeals process in the hands of an agency that is more in-touch with our state's housing issues.

In order to prevent local jurisdictions from capping the number of building permits, language should be added that does not allow these jurisdictions to put them in place. Permit caps are not included in the objective written development standards, and we are concerned that local jurisdictions may institute arbitrary permit caps in response to this legislation.

While the bill as written expands housing availability, we suggest providing bonuses to developers who want to turn existing structures into housing units. There are plenty of opportunities for adaptive reuse in the state of Maryland, and a financial bonus will give developers more of an incentive to take on redevelopment projects that are more difficult to complete. It would also allow local jurisdictions to reach their housing targets faster and use their land more efficiently.

Lastly, we suggest adding language that specifically describes the data that the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning will use in assessing the Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap. This will ensure that the data is transparent and accurate.

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 & Transportation Committee

HB 503 Housing Jobs Act PJC FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Hill

Position: FAV



C. Matthew Hill
Attorney
Public Justice Center
201 North Charles Street, Suite 1200
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410-625-9409, ext. 229
hillm@publicjustice.org

HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Hearing of the Environment and Transportation Committee, Mar. 5, 2025

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

Public Justice Center urges you to move favorable on HB 503. The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a nonprofit public interest law firm that stands with tenants to protect and expand their rights to safe, habitable, affordable, and non-discriminatory housing. The PJC represents or advises over 800 renters and their families each year. Renters in Maryland are in desperate need of additional housing opportunities. As the Moore Administration has pointed out, Maryland is experiencing a severe shortage of housing units. For working class families, the need is even more acute. The state lacks [146,085 units of affordable rental housing for families earning 50% or less of the state median income \(appx. \\$60,000\)](#). Over the last decade, housing costs have far outpaced inflation and wages. As overall costs have increased by 24%, median rents have increased 36% and median home prices have increased by 48%.

At Public Justice Center, we see the impact of this shortage daily. Our clients often cannot find affordable, habitable replacement housing – now more than ever. This lack of housing mobility forces them to remain in uninhabitable units, lose out on job opportunities that require a move, or even become homeless when they are evicted and cannot find a new place. **We recognize that the current affordable housing crisis requires *both* adding to the supply of affordable housing *and* strengthening the rights of renters to maintain safe, affordable housing.**

HB 503's targeted approach only applies to jurisdictions with a housing infrastructure gap. Local jurisdictions with a housing infrastructure gap have an obligation to approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that outweighs the community's need for housing. This obligation includes finding ways to allow a version of a project that mitigates concerns to move forward. This requirement is intended to maximize the housing produced under existing local rules and does not require jurisdictions to increase allowed residential density outside of their own processes.

These reforms are a critical component of any plan to create more affordable housing, and, ultimately, prevent homelessness. The research is clear: the answer to homelessness is affordable housing. The lack of affordable housing affects also increases fiscal burdens on the state including: higher costs for state-funded shelters, increased costs for foster care, reduced tax revenue from lost employment and education instability. A [recent study by Stout, Risius, Ross in Maryland found that every dollar invested by the State in eviction prevention returns \\$2.39 in costs and fiscal benefits.](#)

The need to clear unnecessary regulatory hurdles is exemplified by recent issues in Baltimore County, where PJC has been involved in advocacy. A modest, [proposed 56-unit affordable housing development in Towson known as Red Maple](#) has been the subject of more than 5 years of litigation based on zoning and regulatory disputes. While the project now appears to be moving forward, the delay and increased costs have significantly undermined the financial viability of the project and created additional uncertainty about actual completion. More recently, a [proposed transit-oriented, mixed use development in Lutherville directly on the light rail](#) is facing significant community pushback using zoning and regulatory provisions to anchor their opposition.

Baltimore County is under a [HUD Voluntary Compliance Agreement and is obligated to produce 1,000 new affordable housing units in Opportunity Areas by 2027 to remedy decades of discriminatory land use and zoning policies](#). These discriminatory land use and zoning policies had perpetuated segregation in the County and had a disparate impact on the housing choices available to Black households, households with children and persons with disabilities. The County is lagging far behind in meeting the benchmarks in developing the required affordable units in part because of restrictive zoning and regulatory provisions that have impeded developments such as Red Maple.

In short, Maryland cannot dismantle decades of segregation, right the racial wrongs, and lift children out of poverty without reducing zoning and land use barriers to the development of affordable housing.

Public Justice Center urges the Committee's report of Favorable on HB 503.

HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructur

Uploaded by: Matthew Capodanno

Position: FAV

House Bill 503

Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act) House Environment and Transportation Committee March 4, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

House Bill 503 aims to address Maryland's housing shortage through identifying gaps in housing infrastructure in local jurisdictions and expediting approvals for new housing units in such areas. The bill also sets guidelines for local jurisdictions to deny housing projects that would have adverse impacts on their communities.

The Maryland Food Bank estimates that 1 in 3 Marylanders is at risk of food insecurity. A person who is food insecure does not have consistent access to healthy and nutritious food on any given day, and this problem persists in every area of the state. There are also communities and populations that are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, including communities of color, families with children, and older adults. The drivers of food insecurity are complex and often include additional factors such as low income, lack of reliable transportation, and access to healthcare.

To end food insecurity in Maryland, the root causes of hunger, including housing instability, lack of adequate healthcare access in communities, and limited transportation options, must be addressed. These communities, like hunger, are not restricted by borders, and are found across the state – whether in urban, suburban, or rural areas. With around 2 million Marylanders forced to choose between putting food on the table and paying their bills, no one in these communities should be left behind.

Targeted investments into communities with ongoing anti-poverty projects would be beneficial in reducing need in Maryland as inflation and rising food costs continue to impact everyday Marylanders. The Maryland Food Bank appreciates any effort to increase housing and bring down costs to put more money in Maryland families' pockets, and considers this bill a meaningful step towards eliminating the root causes of hunger.

For these reasons, the Maryland Food Bank respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 503.

HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructur

Uploaded by: Michael McMillan

Position: FAV

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

126 W. 25th Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218
Telephone: 410-889-3566 Facsimile: 410-243-5541
www.atu1300.org

Proudly representing the transit workers of the MTA!



HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act) Favorable

House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 4th, 2025

ATU Local 1300 represents over 3,000 transit workers at the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). This includes bus operators, bus mechanics, rail operators, rail maintenance workers, and more. Our members keep Maryland moving every day.

Transit oriented development (TOD) is a key component of sustainable transportation. Building dense, mixed-use, and walkable neighborhoods near our existing transit infrastructure is essential to ensure we get the best return on our investments. As a transit union, one of our goals is to help move as many riders to where they need to go. TOD drives ridership and helps decrease car dependency. Maryland has a substantial number of underutilized rail stations that would benefit from a serious statewide push for transit oriented development.

HB 503 helps promote transit oriented development by incentivizing the housing gap to be addressed near transit stations. For every housing unit built within three quarters of a mile from a rail station, it counts as 1.5 housing units against the local housing infrastructure gap. The same approach is taken for every affordable housing unit built.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 503.

Maryland Catholic Conference_FAVHB503_.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Zelaya

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 4th, 2025

HB 503

**Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
Environment and Transportation Committee
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 503**. The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act) seeks to address the critical shortage of housing by requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to assess and calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps. This legislation ensures that housing needs are equitably distributed across counties and municipalities, allowing local jurisdictions to take proactive steps to reduce these gaps. Additionally, the bill establishes an affirmative obligation for local governments to expeditiously approve housing development projects, ensuring that bureaucratic delays and unjustified denials do not further contribute to the housing crisis. By prohibiting local jurisdictions from rejecting housing projects without valid justifications, this legislation removes unnecessary barriers to housing development and promotes policies that prioritize the housing needs of communities.

Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is a fundamental human right, and local governments have a moral obligation to remove obstacles that prevent individuals and families from securing adequate shelter. When housing infrastructure gaps go unaddressed, vulnerable populations, including low-income families, seniors, and essential workers—are disproportionately affected, leading to housing instability, economic hardship, and homelessness. By ensuring that housing projects move forward without undue obstruction, this legislation prioritizes the well-being of the most vulnerable members of society and creates a more just and equitable housing system.

At the community level, **House Bill 503** strengthens local economies and fosters social stability. When individuals and families have access to affordable housing near employment opportunities, schools, and essential services, they are better able to contribute to their communities, engage in the workforce, and build stable lives. Housing shortages not only exacerbate economic inequality but also create housing insecurity that disrupts family life, education, and public health. By addressing these gaps in housing infrastructure, Maryland can

promote economic growth, reduce displacement, and build stronger, more inclusive communities.

ensures that housing development is a priority and that local jurisdictions fulfill their responsibility to provide adequate housing options. Just as Catholic social teaching emphasizes the duty of governments to uphold the dignity and rights of all people, this bill calls on local leaders to act with urgency and fairness in approving housing projects. By streamlining housing approvals and eliminating unjustified denials, Maryland can create a future where every individual and family has access to safe, affordable, and dignified housing, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of stable and sustainable communities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 503**.

HB0503 PresMD FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Nicholas Redding

Position: FAV



PRESERVATION MARYLAND

March 04, 2025

Hon. Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB0503 FAVORABLE

Chairperson Korman,

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland and our thousands of statewide supporters, I thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **SUPPORT of HB0503**– a piece of legislation that would require the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate certain regional housing infrastructure gaps.

Preservation Maryland is the nonprofit, statewide voice for historic preservation that harnesses the power of historic places by revitalizing and reinvesting in communities, advocating, and building the historic trades workforce for the benefit of all Marylanders. (Learn more at: presmd.org)

This legislation would establish a new, regional framework for aligning housing opportunities (and creation) with available jobs – and require that counties and municipal governments where there is a deficit of housing may only deny housing projects – whether infill or rehabilitation – using objective development standards. Historic preservation, which is an objective standard, would still apply – but this legislation could jumpstart housing projects and infill construction in legacy communities across the state. From the perspective of growing smarter, this legislation is a positive for the state’s communities working to address the housing crisis.

HB0503 is an impactful piece of legislation, and we urge a favorable report.

Favorable

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Redding, President & CEO

HB0503 - OPPD - LOS - Land Use - Regional Housing

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: FAV

March 4, 2025

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

***Re: Letter of Support – HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap
(Housing for Jobs Act)***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 503 as a means to develop critically needed housing stock throughout the State.

HB 503 requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate certain regional housing infrastructure gaps. This calculation will target regional housing infrastructure gaps in counties, incorporated municipalities, and local jurisdictions, and establish that certain local jurisdictions have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications. HB 503 advances State goals and supports the use of State transit assets by incentivizing the production of housing units in proximity to rail stations.

MDOT supports incentives that further development of housing units near active transportation facilities. The Department recognizes the link between land use policies, housing development regulations, and performance of the transportation system. Building housing that has access to transit is consistent with MDOT's goals of serving communities, supporting the economy, and delivering system quality. Further, these efforts align with projects programmed in the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) related to transit-oriented development (TOD) and the development of State-owned land for TOD.

MDOT currently has projects and programs that support the goal to reduce regional housing infrastructure gaps through TOD. In the Fiscal Year 2025 to 2030 CTP, MDOT has dedicated funds for TOD planning, programming, and related policy and transactional support. MDOT's site specific TOD efforts, including Reisterstown Plaza Metro, Bowie State MARC, and Odenton MARC Station all include the development of a substantial mix of housing types.

HB 503 provides a logical nexus between the planning and co-development of housing with jobs and infrastructure. Integrating affordable housing with TODs can help grow transit ridership and support economic and community development along major transportation corridors. The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information during its deliberations and issue House Bill 503 a favorable report.

The Honorable Marc Korman
Page Two

Respectfully submitted,

Joe McAndrew
Assistant Secretary for
 Planning and Project Delivery
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1006

Matthew Mickler
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090

Testimony in support of HB0503 - Land Use - Region

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB0503_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
03/04/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#0503 – FAVORABLE
Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0503, Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

This bill recognizes that there is a shortage of affordable housing that contributes to a lack of employees who, unable to find housing, cannot fill jobs in jurisdictions where they cannot find a place to live.

Cities, towns, and counties in many regions could benefit from tackling local housing challenges on a regional basis. While regional collaboration can often be challenging, a regional perspective can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the economic conditions that contribute to local housing needs. Additionally, regional approaches offer opportunities for localities within a region to align strategies and share resources, staff, and knowledge to more effectively address shared housing challenges; this is especially true for smaller localities that might benefit from pooling funding, expertise, and other resources on a regional level. Regional approaches can take many shapes, such as the implementation of a single policy or program by two or more jurisdictions, or a more comprehensive approach involving the development and implementation of a regional housing strategy. ... [this document] describe[s] ways localities can use regional approaches to address housing challenges and profile specific examples of successful regional collaboration. ¹

The Centralina Regional Council in Charlotte, North Carolina, has documented the problems this lack of housing can create in a community. ²

¹ <https://localhousingsolutions.org/plan/addressing-housing-challenges-on-a-regional-basis/>

² <https://centralina.org/blog/the-role-of-regionalism-in-affordable-housing/>

As the gap between housing construction and demand continues to widen across the United States, many local communities are faced with housing shortages. In turn, homeowners and renters alike are experiencing significant affordability challenges. The affordable housing crisis impacts everyone by perpetuating inequities, diminishing quality of life of residents and threatening the economy by limiting equal opportunity access. Local officials are motivated to address these shortages to halt these negative outcomes in their communities.

This bill starts a process in Maryland to resolve some of these issues. It plans to accomplish that goal by requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate certain regional housing infrastructure gaps. The problem's parameters should be established before we can work on any solutions. The bill then provides for the apportionment of regional housing infrastructure gaps to counties and incorporated municipalities. It works by then authorizing local jurisdictions to reduce local housing infrastructure gaps in a certain manner. It establishes that certain local jurisdictions have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications.

We must apply regional and local solutions to the lack of housing across the state. This bill will facilitate those processes.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#0503.

HB503.SB430.TheArc.HousingForJobsAct.Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Rylie Shewbridge

Position: FAV



March 4, 2025

Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB430/HB503 – Housing for Jobs Act – Support

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of The Arc Central Chesapeake Region and Chesapeake Neighbors, we write in support of **SB430/HB503 – *Housing for Jobs Act***.

The Arc Central Chesapeake Region empowers people with disabilities to live the lives they choose by providing services, advocating for change, and working to remove barriers to community access. Our goal is to create inclusive communities where everyone is welcome and has access to the resources they need. One way we foster inclusivity is through our subsidiary, Chesapeake Neighbors, which provides beautiful, safe, and accessible affordable rental housing for tenants ranging from low-income to market-rate renters.

During the 2024 legislative session, the state enacted the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 (HEAA), a comprehensive housing package proposed by the Governor to reduce barriers to affordable and attainable housing. The enactment of HEAA marks a significant step toward these goals by incentivizing increased density, expanding affordable housing options, and preserving the ability of county and local governments to strengthen existing zoning ordinances to enhance housing affordability and attainability.

The Housing for Jobs Act builds on the momentum of HEAA and further demonstrates the administration's commitment to increasing affordable housing options in the state. SB430/HB503 would establish a ratio system of available jobs to available housing in different regions to address current housing infrastructure gaps. This legislation would also require local jurisdictions to expedite housing development applications and establish guidelines for providing reasons for denial. Housing development applications and permitting processes continue to be barriers to expanding housing opportunities, and SB430/HB503 directly addresses these concerns.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB430/HB503.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathon Rondeau', written in a cursive style.

Jonathon Rondeau
President & CEO

HB 503 - MSEA - FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Samantha Zwerling

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
House Bill 503
Housing for Jobs Act

House Environment and Transportation Committee
March 4, 2025

Samantha Zwerling
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 503, which would help support affordable housing development in Maryland.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents over 40 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

The shortage of affordable housing is pushing more students and families into homelessness and making it impossible for educators to live in the communities where they work. Where affordable housing is in short supply, educators are in short supply. Students and their families struggle to find decent places to live. The affordable housing crisis is exacerbating the national educator shortage and putting more students at risk of losing their homes.

Last year, through the Joint Chairman's Report, the General Assembly required the Maryland State Department of Education to survey education support staff about pay equity and personal finances. The results tell a story: these educators are having a hard time making ends meet.

- 62% of ESPs make \$42,270 or less (not including IT staff). According to the MIT wage calculator, a living wage in Maryland is \$51,460.
 - *Note: Inflation has increased 32% during the last 10 years.*
- Nearly 80% of ESPs say they need a second job to make ends meet



Educators know that housing policy is education policy. When a student does not have housing security, they won't be able to learn. Students should be able to fully engage in school without thinking about where they'll be sleeping at night. We appreciate how this bill tries to strike a balance between building affordable housing and not overcrowding our schools. We look forward to continue working with the General Assembly and the Department of Housing and Community Development on this issue.

MSEA urges a Favorable Report on House Bill 503.

HB0503 - Housing for Jobs Act - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Talya Kravitz

Position: FAV

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

Re: Support for SB 503 (Housing for Jobs Act)

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), I am writing to express our support for the Housing for Jobs Act of 2025 (SB 430). This bill will release constraints on the state's economic and population growth by addressing our housing affordability and supply crisis with housing production goals in areas where there are too few homes to support available jobs. We applaud the Moore-Miller administration for introducing measures to lower costs for Marylanders while ensuring that the state retains and builds upon its strongest asset—a highly skilled workforce.

The Partnership is a nonprofit alliance of leading employers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia committed to championing the region's growth and vitality. Recognizing the importance of broad-based growth to our overall economic competitiveness, the Partnership developed the [Regional Blueprint for Inclusive Growth](#) as an employer-informed strategy to achieve this goal. Through the Blueprint and with direct investments, our employer community has worked to increase housing availability and affordability to expand access to opportunity in the region.

Maryland's economy has been largely stagnant since 2017 and research from the Comptroller's office and other economic experts points out that high cost of living is limiting growth.¹ Housing demand has outpaced supply, resulting in cost increases that have outpaced inflation and wage growth, leading to the current affordability crisis. More than half of Maryland renters are cost burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income on rent.²

As housing becomes increasingly unattainable, businesses face difficulty attracting and retaining talent, which has serious implications for community investment and economic growth. In Maryland, there are 3.1 job openings for every job seeker compared to the U.S. overall where there are 1.3 openings for every job seeker.³ This indicates that demand among employers for labor is high, but the labor supply is constrained. By identifying the regions and localities with jobs-to-housing ratios that exceed 1.5 and reducing barriers to housing production in those areas, this bill will target housing supply growth where it is needed while facilitating business activity and hiring. Coupled with reforms to promote transit-oriented development and land use patterns permitting increased density, this would add an important tool as the state works to solve its housing challenges.

For these reasons, we urge a **favorable** report on SB 430. Thank you for your consideration and shared commitment to reducing barriers to housing affordability and opportunity, as well as making this region the best place to live, work, and build a business.

Contact:
Thomas J. Maloney
Sr. Vice President, Policy & Research
tmaloney@greaterwashingtonpartnership.com

¹ See [Overview of Current Economic Conditions in Maryland](#) (MD Dept. of Labor, Jan 2024)

² See [Turning the Key: Unlocking Maryland's Potential](#) (MD Dept. of Housing & Community Development, June 2024); see also [State of Economy Report](#) (Office of Comptroller, Jan 2024)

³ See id.



MAHC Testimony_HB 503_Hsng for Jobs Act_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Tom Coale

Position: FAV



Testimony to the Environment & Transportation Committee
HB 503 – Housing for Jobs Act
Position: Favorable (FAV)

The Housing for Jobs Act provides three key benefits that will transform Maryland's development environment for affordable housing: 1) It provides concrete data on the scale of the crisis; 2) It compels local governments to be pro-active in meeting the housing needs of their communities; and 3) It narrows the scope of reasons a project may be denied.

First, Maryland needs housing targets. We've spent the past two sessions talking about the housing crisis, but we are lacking geographic context. Housing is not fungible. We know that an abundance of housing in Baltimore City does not resolve unaffordable housing prices in Howard County. This bill makes the housing needs of each jurisdiction clear and actionable.

Second, this bill will encourage local governments to be proactive in soliciting housing development to meet the needs of its constituents. Our members know that the best government partners in building affordable housing are those who are motivated to see the project through. We cannot allow the status quo of our counties and cities being, at best, passive recipients of development and, at worse, adversaries of critically needed housing. Closing the housing gaps identified in this bill restores local control and is a necessary incentive to bring local governments to the table.

Third, the reasons affordable housing projects have been denied or delayed would fill an afternoon. But if we were to go through those instances, we would miss the larger picture, which is those projects that are never proposed in the first place because of closed schools or some other known obstacle that affordable housing developers cannot take a risk on stopping the project. No one chooses not to move to an area because the schools are overcrowded. In fact, many of our most overcrowded schools are, not coincidentally, some of the highest performing schools in the country. And ***these are the schools*** that adequate public facility regulations have decided will be inaccessible to new affordable housing. The Housing for Jobs Act would prompt a more holistic approach that examines the school capacity of the entire locality, and will not allow the continuation of a system that allows destiny to be set by zip code.

This is an important and necessary bill. The existing regulatory environment, even with the passage of last year's Housing Expansion and Affordability Act, will not allow affordable housing developers to meet the housing needs of our most vulnerable.

MAHC is the leading organization for the affordable rental housing industry in Maryland and represents over 185 member organizations, including nonprofit and for-profit developers, community action groups, State and local housing authorities, property management companies, financial institutions, community development organizations, contractors, investors, consultants and individuals. **We urge your full support of HB 503 as proposed.**



Respectfully submitted on March 4, 2025 by Miranda Darden-Willems, Executive Director, on behalf of the MAHC Board of Directors.

MAHC Board of Directors

Tom Ayd, Green Street Housing, President

Dana Johnson, Homes for America, Vice President

Willy Moore, Southway Builders, Secretary

Miles Perkins, AGM Financial, Treasurer

Mansur Abdul-Malik, NHP Foundation

Mike Cumming, CohnReznick, Chief Financial Officer

Mary Claire Davis, AHC Greater Baltimore

Mike Font, New Harbor Development

Christine Madigan, Enterprise Community Development, Ex-Officio

Dan McCarthy, Episcopal Housing

Brandon Moss, CSI Support & Development

Grant Searfoss, Severn Development

Mo Smith, Vorys, Of Counsel

Patrick Stewart, Pennrose Properties

Catherine Stokes, Diamond & Associates

Milana Vayner, Baltimore County DHCD

Jessica D. Zuniga, Humphrey Management/Foundation Development Group

HB 503_ SB 430 Housing for Jobs Act testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Trudy McFall

Position: FAV



Anne Arundel Affordable Housing Coalition

HB 503 and SB 430

Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: Support

The Anne Arundel Affordable Housing Coalition (AAAHC) supports the Housing for Jobs Act and urges a Favorable report on HB 503 and SB 430.

AAAHC is a coalition of over 50 organizations who promote and advise on affordable housing policy and programs in Anne Arundel County. Our membership includes over 50 organizations, including virtually all the major public and private developers, owners, managers and funders of affordable housing and nonprofit providers of services to lower income affordable housing residents in the County. Our Board consists of the leadership of many of these key organizations and provides a high level of experience and expertise to the County. We are extremely proud of the progress that Anne Arundel County has made in recent years to facilitate, encourage and create affordable housing. The Housing for Jobs Act will further increase and provide State support for affordable housing in Maryland and provide new opportunities for the County to further the construction and rehabilitation of such housing.

The AAAHC supports the bill for several reasons. It furthers and shows the important connection between jobs and housing. The economic impact of housing construction in creating jobs, and the need for counties to have housing for low and moderate workers, who are essential to the County's workforce, is key.

The bill also provides a way for counties to have clear numerical goals they should strive to achieve and relates these goals to jobs. Elsewhere in the country many places have used the setting of jurisdictional goals around a fair share numerical approach to push and measure progress in meeting affordable housing goals. This is a breakthrough approach for Maryland to join and we congratulate the Governor for pushing this idea.

One aspect of the bill of particular importance is the help it will provide for developers in dealing with restrictions due to school capacity conditions and requirements. This is often a major roadblock in counties that do not, like Anne Arundel County, have Adequate Public Facility adjacency provisions and/or exemptions for affordable units in

ANNE ARUNDEL AFFORDABLE
HOUSING COALITION



their laws. Also, giving incentives to affordable housing in locations near transit centers is an important objective in the bill.

Finally, the bill presents a clear mandate to jurisdictions to recognize that they all have a shared obligation to carefully consider and encourage affordable housing developments and not simply reject them arbitrarily.

This bill is a good step forward, but there are some concerns. One is that some of the exceptions listed in the bill seem rather broad and regulations would be needed to further define them to eliminate confusion and debate.

Another issue is how the law would be implemented. The solution in the bill of a developer taking a rejected project to the courts is, to be honest, not very likely. For a developer this is expensive, very time consuming, and likely to create jurisdictional ill will for the developer with future or existing projects in that locality. On the other hand, perhaps for the jurisdictions, it would cause them to be more careful and accepting before rejecting a project since the bill does provide developers an option they may not have now, even if it is not likely to be used often. Finding ways to strengthen or broaden the enforcement provision beyond only developers going to court, might need to be considered if this is found to be a problem over time.

In conclusion, the AAAHC supports the bill, appreciates the State's effort to strengthen the obligations of jurisdictions to facilitate affordable housing and set forth goals for them. This is a real step forward and we hope it will be enacted.

We urge a favorable report.

Submitted by
Trudy McFall, Chair
on behalf of the AAAHC Board

HB 503 - MML - SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Angelica Bailey Thupari

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 4, 2025

Committee: House Environment & Transportation

Bill: HB 503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: Support with Amendments

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (“MML”) appreciates the Administration’s intent with House Bill 503: safe and affordable housing is a fundamental component of a healthy, thriving community, and municipalities have a vested interest in promoting policies and initiatives that ensure housing affordability for all current and future residents. However, this interest must be balanced with the pragmatic challenges of running a local government. To meet these challenges, MML requests amendments addressing the following concerns.

Gap Calculations

Local governments do not have an opportunity for meaningful participation in calculating or apportioning regional housing gaps. We ask that the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning be required to collaborate with municipal/county planning boards when apportioning regional housing gaps to counties and municipalities.

Denials – Review Process & Standard of Review

The Circuit Court is far less familiar with local planning and zoning issues/laws/dynamics than other review boards. This is also inconsistent with the traditional process for reviewing administrative agency decisions. The proposed bill language would significantly limit public notice and engagement opportunities, limit government transparency, and likely create a significant fiscal burden as litigation against local governments is likely to increase exponentially. Additionally, this section may have the reverse effect of its intent, as drastically increasing the number of cases before Circuit Courts will likely slow their deliberations, furthering slowing approvals. This section should be removed or adopted to match the existing process for reviewing administrative agency decisions throughout the state.

The bill also imposes a clear and convincing standard of review, rather than the substantial evidence standard of review applicable to the review of administrative decisions throughout the state. This should also be made consistent with the standard for administrative agency review.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

Denials – Justifications

There are numerous circumstances where review criteria must be more subjective in order to account for the variability of individual applications. Design review is a required process and necessarily has some subjective nature to it.

The bill also does not allow a jurisdiction to deny a project due to either inadequate transportation infrastructure or a development project's inconsistency with the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan. Further, many municipalities have pre-approved development/planning/zoning plans that were the result of comprehensive review and public input. The bill should include a justification for these plans if they address housing needs.

Finally, multiple justifications require a local government to determine "feasibility." Local jurisdictions do not have the proprietary information or resources necessary to determine whether a particular modification to a development project will render it financially infeasible, nor should it be the local government's burden to determine whether a method for mitigating a public health or safety impact will make a project financially infeasible. The list of justifications for denying a project should be expanded and redefined to account for these practical realities.

Timeline

The bill requires local governments to render a final decision on any development application within one year, but does not make it clear from what date the one-year period begins (e.g., from the submittal of the first development application, from the submittal of a building permit application, etc.), and it does not make it clear what "requiring" a project to wait entails. This provision may also have the inadvertent effect of encouraging local jurisdictions to formally deny more applications, rather than less, in an effort to avoid hitting the one-year deemed denial date.

Further, the physical construction that is necessary to build stormwater management facilities, bring water/sewer and other utilities to the site, construct internal streets, meet Forest Conservation Act requirements, etc., cannot reasonably be accomplished 12 months from the date of the first development application (subdivision or site plan). This provision also neglects consideration of the developer's responsibility to address agency comments, meet code requirements, and install necessary infrastructure in a timely manner. Local governments should not be liable for delays caused by the developer. This timeframe should be removed or clarified.

MML appreciates the Administration's collaboration on this issue, and we look forward to continuing the conversation. For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that the Committee adopt these amendments before granting House Bill 503 with a favorable report. For more information, please contact Angelica Bailey Thupari, Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs, at angelicab@mdmunicipal.org or (443) 756-0071. Thank you for your consideration.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.

HB503.pdf

Uploaded by: brian quinn

Position: FWA

March 4, 2025

Brian M. Quinn

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Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman
House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill 503 – Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gas (Housing for Jobs Act) -
FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chairman Korman:

On behalf of our client, Himmelrich Associates, Inc. (“Himmelrich”), I am writing to express our support for HB 503 with the amendments described below. Himmelrich is a Baltimore-based real estate firm focused on repurposing and readapting industrial and historic properties.

Himmelrich supports HB 503 with the following amendments:

1. On page 9, in line 19, after “TO” insert “OR NEIGHBORING”.
2. On page 12, strike beginning with “FOR” in line 1 down through “SCHOOLS” in line 4 and substitute “THAT HAS UNIFORMLY VERIFIABLE CURRENT OR PROJECTED FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT FOR ALL GEOGRAPHICALLY ADJACENT SCHOOLS THAT EXCEEDS 100% OF THE CURRENT OR ESTIMATED SCHOOL RATED CAPACITY FOR EACH OF THE SCHOOLS”.

The first change clarifies the definition of “Geographically Adjacent School” to ensure that the language captures school districts with common boundaries. Maryland case law has provided inconsistent interpretations of the term “contiguous” in various contexts. Clarifying the definition here provides certainty.

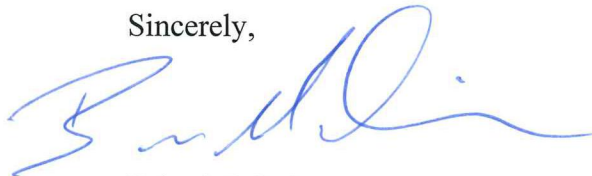
The second change clarifies one of the justifications a local government may use to deny a housing development. As introduced, the legislation would allow a local government to deny a project if the sum of current/estimated capacity for the school serving the district in which the project is located and all geographically adjacent schools exceeds 100%. This section of the bill as introduced is too restrictive and will have unintended consequences. For example, if a proposed

March 4, 2025

housing development is to be located in a school district that is 101% capacity and is geographically adjacent to one district that is 150% capacity and one district that is only 70% capacity - the project can be denied even though there is sufficient capacity in an adjacent district to accommodate the housing development. As amended, a local jurisdiction may not use school overcrowding as a basis for denying a housing development if a geographically adjacent school is under 100% state rated capacity. This better reflects how school capacity is actually addressed by local governments, as redistricting can be used to accommodate growth and changes in school enrollment. As long as there is capacity in a geographically adjacent school to accommodate additional students, local governments should not be able to use school capacity as a basis for denying a housing development.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Quinn

cc: Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee

HB0503-ET_MACo_SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FWA



House Bill 503

Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Environment and Transportation
Committee

Date: March 4, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS HB 503 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill makes several changes to the land use article, establishing a jobs-to-housing ratio and certain threshold requirements should a county fall below a certain ratio.

For years, Maryland's counties and the General Assembly have prioritized expanding the supply of affordable housing. The 2024 passage of the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act, a cornerstone of the Moore/Miller Administration, introduced a new state density bonus system. MACo played a pivotal role in advancing a historic number of impactful housing measures, equipping counties with critical tools to combat blight and vacancy.

This year, the Administration introduced HB 503 as its next major housing initiative. However, counties—key implementation partners—have not been deeply included in the shaping of this subsequent package and have very serious concerns about its unintended consequences. While committed to partnering with the Administration to expand housing opportunities, counties urge a more collaborative approach to ensure effective, locally responsive solutions. Counties offer the following amendments to both strengthen this legislation and ease local apprehensions:

General questions regarding certain mechanics of HB 503:

1. How did the supporters settle on the 1.5 jobs to 1 housing unit ratio, central to much of the bill's effects? Are there other states employing this model successfully?
2. How is the proposal capturing workers who are virtual or live in one county and work in another? This increasingly common arrangement is not always for reasons related to housing affordability, which influence decisions on where to live.
3. Counties are worried that allocating regional data to specific jurisdictions presents an imperfect picture of the data itself, as the data is regional and does not go as deep as the county level. Are there specific datapoints that can more accurately reflect these numbers?

As the frontline actor in land use – and housing policy – counties remain committed to working with the Administration in advancing comprehensive housing solutions. The amendments included on the following pages are critical in nature, without which HB 503 will likely have severe operational and fiscal consequences for Maryland's counties and communities. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to amend HB 503 to remedy these concerns, and issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report.

MACo Amendments to HB 503

Amendment #1

On page 9, line 6, after “APPLICATION”, INSERT,

“OR THE LENGTH OF ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVAL REQUESTED BY THE APPLICANT OF THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, WHICHEVER IS GREATER.”.

Limiting the review of school capacity to seven years is not effective for projects seeking a longer approval period. For example, some county Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances use a sliding scale of approval periods based on the number of housing units proposed, with a maximum approval period of 10 years. The additional language will cover the entire approval period and a significant portion of the buildout and occupancy phase of the development project.

Amendment #2

On page 9, strike in their entirety lines 13 and 14.

One year is not enough time for a county or a developer to complete the necessary state and local land use requirements prior to beginning the construction of housing. The physical construction that is necessary to build stormwater management facilities, bring water/sewer and other utilities to the site, construct internal streets, meet Forest Conservation Act requirements, etc., cannot reasonably be accomplished 12 months from the date of the first development application (subdivision or site plan). This provision also neglects consideration of the developer’s responsibility to address agency comments, meet code requirements, and install necessary infrastructure in a timely manner. Counties should not be liable for delays caused by the developer.

Amendment #3

On page 9, line 29 strike through page 10, line 7,

There are numerous circumstances where review criteria must be more subjective in order to account for the variability of individual applications. Design review is a required process and necessarily has some subjective nature to it. Similarly, Forest Conservation requirements vary by project size, and subjectivity is built into those reviews as it is impossible to legislate every possible situation.

Amendment #4

On page 11, line 8, strike after "IMPACT" through "INFEASIBLE" in line 9 and insert,

“OR THE APPLICANT OF THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DECLINES TO MITIGATE OR AVOID THE ADVERSE IMPACT.”.

It should not be the local jurisdiction’s burden to determine whether a method for mitigating a public health or safety impact will make a project financially infeasible. Further, counties will likely not have the information needed to make such a determination.

Amendment #5

On page 11, strike in their entirety lines 10 through 14, inclusive.

This places the burden of defending state or federal law onto local jurisdictions. It should not be the local jurisdiction’s burden to determine whether complying with state or federal law will make a project financially infeasible. Further, counties will likely not have the information needed to make such a determination.

Amendment #6

On page 12, strike in their entirety lines 11 and 12.

It should not be the local jurisdiction’s burden to determine whether a method for mitigating a public health or safety impact will make a project financially infeasible. Counties would likely not have the information needed to make such a determination.

Amendment #7

On page 12, strike in their entirety lines 17 through 32, inclusive.

The proposed bill language would cause serious conflict with the existing local appeals process established in the Land Use Article, significantly limit public notice and engagement opportunities, limit government transparency, and likely create a significant fiscal burden as litigation against counties is likely to increase exponentially. Additionally, this section may have the reverse effect of its intent, as drastically increasing the number of cases before Circuit Courts will likely slow their deliberations, furthering slowing approvals.

FINAL HOUSE Position Statement HB 0503_SB 0430 Hou

Uploaded by: Jordan BaucumColbert

Position: FWA



POSITION STATEMENT

Bill: HB 0503/SB 0430 Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: Support with Amendments

Date: March 4, 2025

Contact: Debra Borden, General Counsel

Jordan Baucum Colbert, Government Affairs Liaison

Dear: Chair Marc Korman,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“M-NCPPC” or the “Commission”) has voted to support this bill with amendments.

What this Bill Does. This bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Planning to calculate certain regional housing infrastructure gaps. It also provides for the apportionment of regional housing infrastructure gaps to counties and incorporated municipalities, authorizing local jurisdictions to reduce local housing infrastructure gaps in a certain manner. It establishes that certain local jurisdictions have an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve housing development project applications and prohibits certain local jurisdictions from denying certain housing development project applications without certain justifications; and generally relating to housing development and land use.

Commissions Housing Goals. Planning staff believe the current bill as written will not have much impact on Prince George’s and Montgomery Counties. Within the Commission, both Prince George’s Planning and Montgomery Planning Departments have housing targets and are actively trying to meet their housing goals. It is important to note that both Planning Boards rarely deny projects and if they do, the Board’s reasonings are valid and justified based on evidence in the record. Instead of denial, our Planning Boards rely upon extensive conditions of approval to ensure compliance with the various provisions of our zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations. However, the question becomes whether an applicant could argue that certain conditions of approval altered a project’s cost

projections or rendered a project infeasible, according to the applicant, encouraging endless litigation. Also, the bill as written does not provide a clear understanding of whether the law would only apply to decisions by the planning departments and/or the permitting agencies. Would the current bill also apply to the review of conditional uses by the hearing examiners, the approval of variances by boards of appeal, the approval of zoning map/text amendments by legislative bodies?

Bill Recommendations to Consider

- (A) ***Consider using BLS data rather than BEA data as it is more accurate.***
 - a. Note that Montgomery County's job-to-housing ratio is much more in line with BLS data.
- (B) ***Consider using occupied housing units instead of the total number of units.***
 - a. Baltimore City is included in the Baltimore region, which has a jobs-to-housing ratio above 1.5 but according to the most recent ACS data, has nearly 36,000 vacant units (12% of housing stock). Montgomery County's vacancies are so low that this will not significantly impact our ratio (vacancy rate of around 3.5%).
- (C) ***Page 7: 12-202 (A)(6)(II) A Rail Station shall be considered "planned" if it is on a finalized rail route with completed development approvals.***
 - a. It's unclear why this provision links finalized rail stations with development approvals. It's more typical to link them to rail projects that are fully funded for construction or tied to an approved master plan (project delivery in the long term).
- (D) ***Page 7: 12-202 (B)(2) For everyone housing unit built within three quarters of a mile of a rail stations, 1.5 housing units may be subtracted from the local housing infrastructure gap.***
 - a. How is a unit considered "built"? Using census data (how it appears the ratio is calculated) would be difficult, given that you get a "bonus" for units built inside a rail station buffer. The data would likely need to come from the Department of Permitting Services' use and occupancy data.
 - b. How is the 3/4th distance being measured?
- (E) ***Page 8: 12-202 (D)(1) In order to reduce a local housing infrastructure gap under subsection (b) of this section, a local jurisdiction shall submit documentation to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).***
 - a. Note that in Montgomery County to submit this documentation requires close coordination between Planning, the Department of Permitting Services (DPS), the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), and Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH). What agency will take the lead for submission?
- (F) ***Page 9: 12-203 (A)(5)(II) To deny a housing development project application includes requiring that a housing development project wait a period of one or more years to receive a building permit.***
 - a. How are we measuring that a project wait a period of one or more years to receive a permit? From what starting date? Submittal of plans? Approval of plans? Submittal of permit?
- (G) ***Page 9: 12-203 (A)(8) Housing development permit applications means an application for building permit, variance, waiver, conditional use permit, special permit, certification,***

authorization, site plan approval, subdivision approval, or other determination by a local jurisdiction relating to a housing development project.

- a. These list out multiple types of applications. Many projects are required to go through multiple of the listed. Does each step get 1 year, or cumulatively does the whole process start to finish need to take less than 1 year?

(H) *Page 11: 12-203 (1)(i): The housing development project as proposed would have a specific adverse impact upon the public health or safety to the residents that would live in the project.*

- a. Define “adverse impact upon the public health or safety of the residents that would live in the project”.

The Commission recently pulled the QCEW vs the BEA data for the jurisdictions on the list so you can see the differences in the spreads and included some source information. We have identified a few considerations:

- (A) The BEA is no longer producing County-level employment data due to budget constraints, so this is not a good data source to use in the legislation because jobs numbers will need to be updated to track progress vs the targets. See the note here: <https://www.bea.gov/data/employment/employment-county-metro-and-other-areas>
- (B) The 1.5 ratio target seems to reflect the state average today, but not what may be needed in the future. As you know, given the aging population, we will need more housing per job on an average basis since fewer people will be working.

We therefore urge this committee to give a favorable report with the suggested amendments.

MGA 2025 Testimony Bill HB0503 (Housing for Jobs A

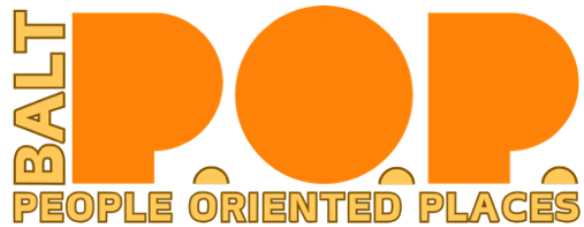
Uploaded by: Michael Scepaniak

Position: FWA

Bill: HB0503

Bill Title: Land Use - Regional Housing
Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

Position: **Favorable with Amendments**



Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

As a group which believes that encouraging traditional, higher-density development patterns in Maryland will deliver us appealing, affordable, fiscally-sustainable communities, we support HB0503.

Housing affordability has gradually and all at once become a top concern for Marylanders. [1] Younger residents/voters, in particular, are overwhelmingly feeling the effects of this in an acute way, with 75% of **all** Marylanders agreeing that there is too little housing for them. [2]

This bill is one of many introduced over the course of the past two legislative sessions that are attempting to address this issue - from many angles. The overlapping plans of attack are necessary because of the deep-seated cultural forces that are silently aligned against us getting to the point where we can declare the problem solved.

The negative effects of affordable housing are most acutely suffered by younger and lower-income residents. Conversely, the positive effects of affordable housing are broadly enjoyed by... everyone else.

Policy discussions about creating affordable housing often suffer from a fatal incoherence. The people having the conversation and the organizations they represent are generally harmed by a decrease in prices. The incoherence is that they want housing to become more affordable but without prices going down.

[...]

To truly reduce prices through supply and demand mechanisms requires building a lot of new units. There is an institutional inertia against such an approach. That resistance needs to be acknowledged, not to shame but to understand why this challenge is so difficult. The list of those who benefit from high housing prices is long. It includes nearly everyone in a position to influence the production of new housing.

For example, local governments benefit from high housing prices. This is especially true for places that utilize the property tax. [3]

The fact that housing affordability has now risen to the top of so many people's concerns is a testament to how bad the situation has become.

While we support this bill, there are a few changes we would like to see made to it.

The bill provides for incentives for the construction of housing units within close proximity to public transit stations and housing units that are made affordable by deed restrictions. **We would like to see the bill amended such that these incentives extended to more “naturally occurring” forms of affordable housing.** The two that most immediately come to mind are accessory dwelling units and accessory apartments. Since both of these unit types are constructed within existing space constraints, they tend to take the form of smaller units which are naturally affordable. And it is these smallest of housing units which we are in the greatest need of producing.

In the bill, the smallest unit of measure to which a regional housing infrastructure gap may be apportioned is a county and an incorporated municipality. In the case of a county such as Baltimore County, which has no incorporated municipalities, we are concerned that the county will turn toward far-flung, low-density, greenfield development in a bid to address their gap. We do not want the counties to feel compelled or encouraged to pursue a sprawling, automobile-dependent, fiscally unsustainable development pattern. **We would like to see the bill amended such that housing units built outside of a jurisdiction's existing infrastructure footprint only allows for the subtraction of 0.5 units from a local housing infrastructure gap.**

Exceptions are provided for communities where the schools are at or above capacity. While this makes absolute sense on the surface, we suspect that school overcrowding is frequently weaponized to prevent the construction of new housing, such that those communities then push back against new school construction or school redistricting efforts. **We would like to see the bill amended such that school overcrowding can only be used to prevent housing construction for a limited period of time, such as a maximum of two years.** It is during that time the community would pursue school redistricting.

The main thrust of the bill's logic is based on achieving a healthy jobs-to-housing ratio. While this makes sense, we have to imagine that concessions need to be made for seasonal and other temporary workers. The immediate example that comes to mind is the annual struggle Ocean City experiences to house all of their Summer help. **We would like to see the bill amended such that this type of situation is accounted for, simply so that such concerns are not allowed to preclude the broader state-wide aims of the bill.**

Setting high-level targets and expectations for the state's jurisdictions, while allowing those jurisdictions to figure out how, specifically, they will hit those targets and satisfy those expectations is a good approach.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote in favor of HB0503, with our suggested amendments**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

[BaltPOP - Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places](#)

References:

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<https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/politics-power/state-government/maryland-housing-costs-poll-TCX7O2ZX5NELBFQYUBXD7VMKFE/>

[2] Maryland REALTORS. "State Of Maryland Housing 2025". As of February 27, 2025.

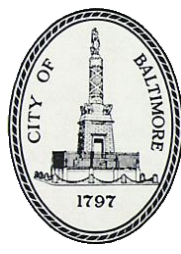
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[3] Charles L. Marohn Jr., Daniel Herriges. "Escaping the Housing Trap". 2024.

HB503_FWA_THEMELIS

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FWA



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 0503

March 4, 2025

TO: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 0503 - Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)

POSITION: Support with Amendments

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports with amendments House Bill (HB) 0503.

HB 0503 would require the State's Housing and Planning Departments to calculate certain housing infrastructure gaps for different regions and pass the information on to local governments. If a local jurisdiction has a housing infrastructure gap greater than 1, the local jurisdiction will have an "affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve" any housing development project application. The local jurisdiction cannot disapprove a housing project application unless it provides a justification that "clearly outweighs the need for housing" supported by clear and convincing evidence. The local jurisdictions must articulate one of several narrow reasons for any denial. The law also details the developer's recourse in court to challenge the denial and a court could order that the local jurisdiction approve the development.

It is unclear where Baltimore would fall on the "jobs-to-housing-ratio" and there are several factors unique to Baltimore City including a significant number of vacant properties, a slightly shrinking population, a large number of jobs held by commuters, a remote workforce and multiple job holders living within one-unit.

The BCA supports the amendments being requested by the Maryland Association of Counties and looks forward to continuing to work with state DHCD to ensure Baltimore City's concerns are addressed. One specific amendment being requested by the BCA would be to clarify language regarding the implementation timeline. It is currently unclear whether the local jurisdictions would be required to begin compliance with HB 503 upon receipt of the report as provided by state DHCD in 12-201.(B). As the effective date of the bill is January 1, 2026 and the report must be sent no later than January 1st of each year, there would likely need to be additional time provided for the jurisdictions to review the report and ensure compliance.

The state Department of Housing and Community Development has been an excellent partner to the BCA and we look forward to ensuring that we continue working together to reduce the number of vacant properties within Baltimore City as well as continue to develop affordable housing for our residents.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully urges a **favorable with amendments** report on HB 0503.

HB503_SB430 FAV. w_school protections needed and r

Uploaded by: Ryan Powers

Position: FWA

Dear Committee,

I am in favor of this bill, but three major problems stand out.

1) Many people living in a region commute to other areas for work. It is unclear what "THE TOTAL NUMBER OF JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK" actually means. Are they places of work within the region? This proportionality seems to penalize more residential counties at the expense of counties with large businesses, such as federal/other government buildings. I am also worried about a positive feedback loop- as it is much easier to predict and legislate/add more housing than it is to provide jobs. Like common network effects, nodes of residential housing will only see more housing, not jobs.

2) State rated capacity is not a good number to use. This bill should defer to local-rated capacity. Local school systems know their buildings the best. In Howard County, for example, our local capacity takes into account various special education and other specialized program spaces which the IAC does not consider the same in its calculations. This will likely apply to other counties, but **by using state-rated capacity many of Howard County's schools would likely see their students increase by +100 students/building at 100%SRC, often in Title 1 schools.** This leads to an imbalance between the needs of school-aged children (infrastructure) and housing. We already have students in schools with one-way hallways as it is.

3) Frequent redistricting is in direct opposition to the learning goals the Blueprint seeks to achieve. It is disruptive to communities and the learning process- redistricted students do see setbacks. Consideration of geographically located schools to relieve overcrowding should be left up to local education agencies and shouldn't be automatically applied as a "one size fits all" approach to housing.

Please see my email below with Howard County specific data if interested.

HB503/SB430- Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap will cause undue strain on Howard County Schools and continually interfere with local communities.

1) I don't understand the rationale for a "housing gap" in the first place. This is not how our country and county was built. What does "jobs by place of work" mean? We have at least 44,000 thousand federal workers in Maryland US District 3. Is this housing gap intentionally ignoring that people commute to work far away from where they live? More importantly....

2) In using state-rated capacity for our schools, locally-defined capacity is completely ignored. In many cases, this difference is more than a **hundred students.** (The chart

of state-rated vs local capacity is presented below, as well as the difference in students for our schools)

3) In prohibiting what are essentially county infrastructure concerns by saying development can proceed if the state-rated capacity of geographically located schools is under 100%, this bill does two things:

A. Ignores disruptions to local communities caused by frequent redistricting. Students and families build a large part of their friends, lives, and healthy communities around school.

B. Ignores that redistricting is a lengthy process. The Bryant Woods ES redistricting begun in Fall 2024 will not result in actual changes until the 26-27 school year. How long will our students have to be in overcrowded schools?

[02 13 25 Initiate Boundary Review Process in 2025 Presentation.pdf - Google Drive](#)

Here is are the parts of the bill I am particularly concerned about:

(E) A LOCAL JURISDICTION SHALL CITE AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING AS A JUSTIFICATION TO DENY A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT APPLICATION THAT CLEARLY OUTWEIGHS THE NEED FOR HOUSING:

(5) THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IS LOCATED, AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION, IN A SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREA:

28 (I) THAT HAS UNIFORMLY VERIFIABLE CURRENT OR PROJECTED FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT FOR THE SCHOOL THAT EXCEEDS 100% OF THE SCHOOL'S CURRENT OR ESTIMATED STATE RATED CAPACITY

(II) FOR WHICH THE SUM OF THE UNIFORMLY VERIFIABLE CURRENT OR PROJECTED FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT FOR THE SCHOOL AND ITS GEOGRAPHICALLY ADJACENT SCHOOLS EXCEEDS 100% OF THE SUM OF THE CURRENT OR ESTIMATED STATE RATED CAPACITY FOR THOSE SCHOOLS; AND

(III) THAT HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL JURISDICTION, USING UNIFORMLY VERIFIABLE OBJECTIVE CRITERIA, TO HAVE INADEQUATE SCHOOL CAPACITY;

Again, because stated-rated capacity is defined and used in (i) and (ii), I believe local-rated capacity cannot be used for a reason in (iii). **I'm asking that you intentionally use local-rated capacity in this bill.**

Here is the HCPSS Chart comparing State-rated vs. Local capacity. [06 20 24-2024 Feasibility Study Report.pdf](#) Page 9.

Table 2.3 Local Capacity and State Rated Capacities for School Year 2023-24

Elementary	Local	State
Atholton ES	424	463
Bellows Spring ES	726	767
Bollman Bridge ES	609	775
Bryant Woods ES	289	438
Bushy Park ES	732	727
Centennial Lane ES	603	731
Clarksville ES	543	517
Clemens Crossing ES	521	525
Cradlerock ES	398	573
Dayton Oaks ES	719	793
Deep Run ES	719	798
Ducketts Lane ES	650	709
Elkridge ES	713	842
Forest Ridge ES	647	662
Fulton ES	738	762
Gorman Crossing ES	735	902
Guilford ES	465	464
Hammond ES	653	681
Hanover Hills ES	810	958
Hollifield Station ES	732	727
Ilchester ES	559	686
Jeffers Hill ES	377	412
Laurel Woods ES	609	680
Lisbon ES	527	513
Longfellow ES	512	556
Manor Woods ES	681	593
Northfield ES	700	731
Phelps Luck ES	597	617
Pointers Run ES	744	780
Rockburn ES	584	716
Running Brook ES	449	582
St Johns Lane ES	612	593
Stevens Forest ES	380	450
Swansfield ES	650	681
Talbott Springs ES	490	434
Thunder Hill ES	509	532
Triadelphia Ridge ES	584	614
Veterans ES	799	914
Waterloo ES	603	660
Waverly ES	788	948
West Friendship ES	414	422
Worthington ES	424	562

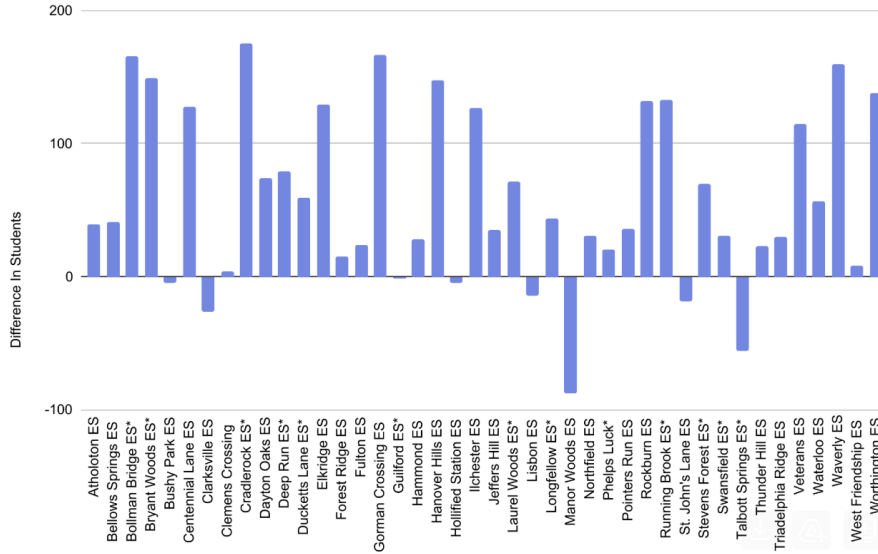
Middle	Local	State
Bonnie Branch MS	701	732
Burleigh Manor MS	779	795
Clarksville MS	643	619
Dunloggin MS	565	619
Elkridge Landing MS	779	760
Ellicott Mills MS	701	816
Folly Quarter MS	662	732
Glenwood MS	545	640
Hammond MS	604	679
Harpers Choice MS	506	619
Lake Elkhorn MS	643	765
Lime Kiln MS	721	732
Mayfield Woods MS	798	773
Mount View MS	798	760
Murray Hill MS	662	685
Oakland Mills MS	506	598
Patapsco MS	643	598
Patuxent Valley MS	760	770
Thomas Viaduct	740	754
Wilde Lake MS	740	590

High	Local	State
Atholton HS	1530	1811
Centennial HS	1360	1530
Glenelg HS	1420	1675
Guilford Park HS	1658	0
Hammond HS	1445	1434
Howard HS	1400	1051
Long Reach HS	1488	1434
Marriotts Ridge HS	1615	1434
Mt Hebron HS	1400	1408
Oakland Mills HS	1400	1135
Reservoir HS	1573	1339
River Hill HS	1488	1483
Wilde Lake HS	1424	1434

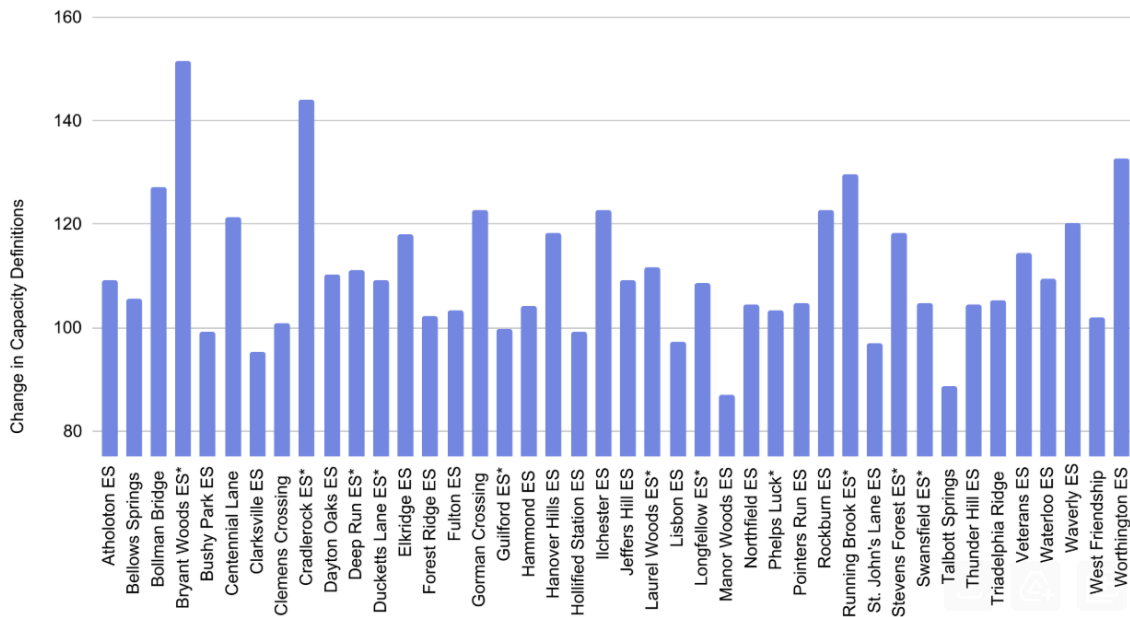


Here is a chart I made showing the difference for Elementary Schools. The schools with asterisks are **Title 1 schools, which will have some of the highest increases.** MS present the same trend, while HS are mixed.

Difference In Students Between State-Rated Capacity and Local Capacity



Change in "Capacity" if State-Rated Capacity is used



Thank you,

Ryan Powers

3646 Sharp Rd,
Glenwood, MD 21738

HB 503_Baltimore City CP_FWA (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Shamoyia Gardiner

Position: FWA



Zeke Cohen

President
Baltimore City Council

400 City Hall • Baltimore, Maryland
21202 410-396-4804 • Fax 410-539-0647

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee
Re: HB 503: Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
Position: Favorable with Amendments
Date: March 4, 2025

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Governor Moore for the introduction of this priority legislation focused on filling gaps in our state's housing infrastructure. A strong supply of housing is vital to the realization of Baltimore's goals: population growth, increased public safety, and economic revitalization in our most disinvested neighborhoods. As I have said many times: this is Baltimore's moment.

Despite some innovation and progress, Baltimore City must scale efforts to grow our housing stock. As we work to attract ever more qualified workers to our City, we want to ensure that Baltimore is a great place to live just as much as it is a great place to work. This necessitates that housing is affordable—no more than 30% of one's income.

However, in many neighborhoods, the demand simply exceeds supply. In some predominantly low-income and Black neighborhoods, like Oliver and Greater Rosemont, Baltimoreans have to allocate more than half of their income to rent, underscoring how affordability is a complicating factor that exacerbates the supply crisis.

As of the testimony submission deadline for this bill hearing, there is no fiscal and policy note from the Department of Legislative Services available to aid in understanding the scope of potential impact for this legislation. I urge the committee to consider amendments that will support Baltimore's efforts to increase our population, but decrease the preponderance of vacant homes and increase affordability and safety.

For all the reasons above, **I urge the committee to issue a favorable with amendments report on House Bill 503.**

For additional information, email
shamoyia.gardiner@baltimorecity.gov

The Baltimore City Council is a collaborative body dedicated to delivering reliable, equitable, and sustainable results, which enhance the quality of life for all Baltimoreans. Through agency oversight, legislation, fiscal stewardship, and advocacy, we ensure the City gets the 'basics' right, while also striving toward long-term, systems-level transformation.

HB 503_Baltimore City CP_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Shamoyia Gardiner

Position: FWA



Zeke Cohen

President
Baltimore City Council

400 City Hall • Baltimore, Maryland
21202 410-396-4804 • Fax 410-539-0647

To: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Re: HB 503: Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
Position: Favorable with Amendments
Date: March 4, 2025

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HB 503 - Regional Housing Allocation - Jobs to Hou

Uploaded by: Tom Ballentine

Position: FWA



February 28, 2025

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

Favorable w Amendments: HB 503 – Regional Housing Allocation – Jobs to Housing Ratio

Dear Chair, Korman, and Committee Members:

NAIOP represents 22,000+ commercial real estate professionals in the United States and Canada. Our Maryland membership is comprised of a mix of local firms and publicly traded real estate investment trusts that deliver office, mixed use, multi-family, and warehouse developments that meet the changing ways that people work, live, shop and play. On behalf of our member companies, I am writing to support HB 503 with amendments.

The current framework for growth management in Maryland was established in the early 1990s through the enactment of the Smart Growth Areas Act. Among its provisions was the creation of locally designated Priority Funding Areas to serve as the location for future job and household growth. Those growth areas were certified to contain sufficient development capacity to accommodate 20 years of forecasted growth. More than 30 years later those growth areas are at or near their estimated development capacity and are not functioning as originally intended.

Despite the deteriorating performance of designated growth areas, the comprehensive land use plans of central Maryland counties project robust job growth *and* housing buildout. This is unrealistic, unsustainable, and contrary to sound planning principles.

A healthy jobs-to-housing distribution is an important indicator of planning success. As that distribution becomes more geographically imbalanced, traffic congestion will increase as workers commute from outside the region to fill available jobs and housing affordability will further deteriorate as demand far out paces supply. These issues will undercut the region's appeal to new companies and talent, strain the transportation system and negatively impact the environment and quality of life for residents and commuters.

HB 503 takes overdue steps to address shortcomings in local land use planning. It can be a vital tool in achieving multiple priorities related to quality of life, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality.

That said, from our point of view, the bill does not make local land use authorities responsible for achieving planning and zoning results that better align with job and household growth projections. Amendments to related to performance outcomes would improve the bill.

For these reasons, NAIOP respectfully recommends your favorable w amendments report on HB 503.

Sincerely,

Tom Ballentine, Vice President for Policy
NAIOP – Maryland Chapters, *The Association for Commercial Real Estate*

cc: House Environment and Transportation Committee Members

Testimony opossing SB430 HB503.pdf

Uploaded by: Alan Davis

Position: UNF

Testimony in Opposition to HB503 / SB430

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Alan Davis, and as the founder of MoCo's Neighborhood Preservation Alliance, we strongly oppose HB503 and SB430.

These bills threaten the character, stability, and livability of Maryland's single-family neighborhoods by allowing increased density without regard for local zoning, infrastructure capacity, or community input. While we all support affordable housing, a one-size-fits-all approach that forces upzoning will not solve the housing crisis it will only strain public services, increase traffic congestion, and reduce green space, all while failing to guarantee affordability.

Local governments, not state mandates, are best positioned to make land-use decisions that reflect the needs of their communities. Montgomery County and other jurisdictions are already working on housing solutions tailored to their specific challenges. This bill would override that local planning process, disregarding the voices of residents who have invested in and built their communities.

I urge the committee to reject HB503 and SB430 and instead support solutions that encourage responsible growth while preserving the character of our neighborhoods. Thank you.

Respectively,

Alan Davis
MoCo's Neighborhood Preservation Alliance

HB 503 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Craig Ulman

Position: UNF

104 Primrose Street
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815-3325

February 28, 2025

To: The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Craig H. Ulman

Subject: House Bill 503 – Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)
UNFAVORABLE

As a Montgomery County resident for more than forty years, and as a lawyer with extensive experience in drafting and interpreting state statutes (and sometimes litigating over them), I urge your Committee not to approve HB 503 without first addressing its glaring deficiencies.

HB 503 seeks to alleviate housing shortages attributed to difficulties and delays in obtaining required approvals from county and municipal authorities. As the Director of the Montgomery County Office of Intergovernmental Relations has told the Montgomery County Council, HB 503 “is a sweeping preemption bill that is intended to force local jurisdictions to ‘get to yes’ on approving housing projects.”

Even assuming that the premise of HB 503 is sound and that some Statewide changes in local zoning and planning processes could be warranted, the Bill cannot, at least in its current form, be expected to achieve its objective. It would lead to protracted, costly litigation over “housing development project applications,” and over the meaning of many of the Bill’s confusing provisions, long before it might contribute to development of additional housing in areas where it might be needed (assuming that additional “housing for jobs” will be needed, notwithstanding the impending losses of tens of thousands of federal jobs in Maryland).

If HB 503 were in effect today, each “local jurisdiction” in the “Washington Region” (Frederick, Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties and their incorporated municipalities) and the “Baltimore Region” (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties and their municipalities and Baltimore City) would have a “local housing infrastructure gap.” Anytime any of those jurisdictions receives a “housing project development application” – broadly defined to include any “application for a building permit, a variance, a waiver, a conditional use permit, a special permit, a certification, and authorization, a site plan approval, a subdivision approval, or any other determination by a local jurisdiction relating to a housing development project” – the jurisdiction would be required either (i) “expeditiously” to approve the application or (ii) to establish “by clear and convincing evidence” that the application should be denied, based on at least one of six limited justifications, and to establish that the justification “clearly outweighs the need for housing.” Thus, the local jurisdictions would be required to bear

the burden and expense of establishing that housing project development applications should be disapproved, rather than requiring applicants/developers to establish that their applications should be approved.

Following are several of the issues presented by the Bill. Words and phrases quoted from the bill are explained in the accompanying bill summary.

- In order to deny a “housing project development application” based on any of the permissible justifications for denial, a local jurisdiction would have to establish that the justification “clearly outweighs the need for housing.” How would a local jurisdiction be expected to weigh the need for housing or to compare it to any of the permitted justifications for denying an application? For example, would the possible need for a hundred, housing units to close a theoretical “local housing infrastructure gap” *clearly outweigh* a “specific adverse impact” on the public health or safety of residents, or *clearly outweigh* a project’s obligation “to comply with specific State or federal law”?
- In order to deny a “housing project development application” based on several of the permissible justifications for denial, a local jurisdiction would have to establish that there is “no feasible method” to overcome the obstacle to the proposed project without rendering it “financially infeasible.” How could a local jurisdiction be expected to establish the *absence* of any financially feasible alternative without, at a minimum, having extensive information about a project’s financial feasibility for the applicant/developer? Why should an applicant/developer be expected to provide reliable financial information to enable a local jurisdiction to establish grounds for denying the applicant/developer’s own application?
- A “housing project development application” could appropriately be denied (assuming that other conditions for denial are met) if the project “would have a specific adverse impact on the public health or safety” of “the residents *that would live in the project.*” Shouldn’t denial of an application also be permissible if the project would adversely affect the health or safety of residents that live near the project and might be harmed by the project itself or during its construction?
- The Bill authorizes an applicant/developer to sue in Circuit Court to contest denial of a “housing project development application.” It says nothing about the ability of neighbors or other local residents to participate in such Circuit Court proceedings. Does that omission mean that only the applicant/developer and the local jurisdiction would have standing?
- The Bill provides for identification of housing infrastructure gaps based on housing unit totals that do not include “pipeline” units, i.e., units that have received necessary approvals but have not yet been built. In some cases already-approved units could be more than sufficient to close a “local housing infrastructure gap.” For example, in fall 2024 Montgomery County had 35,240 approved, un-built housing units, according the

Development Pipeline data published by the County Planning Board. See (https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sep2024Pipeline_RecordLevel.pdf). The State Department of Housing and Community Development has determined that under HB 503, Montgomery County currently would have a “local housing infrastructure gap” of 31,364 housing units (not counting the “pipeline” units). If the objective of HB 503 is to alleviate housing shortages attributed to difficulties and delays in obtaining required approvals for new housing units, shouldn’t housing units that already have received all required approvals be counted in identifying and measuring shortages?

* * * *

These and other issues may be addressed through appropriate amendments, but they would have to be carefully drafted, with extensive input from counties and municipalities throughout the State and from concerned State residents, whose neighborhoods and communities could be profoundly affected by the sweeping changes in State and local law proposed in HB 503.

For further information:

Craig H. Ulman
craig.ulman@hoganlovells.com
301/986-0341

Summary of House Bill 503 / Senate Bill 430

Designation of Regions. HB 503/SB 430 (the “Housing for Jobs Act”) would divide Maryland into six regions, one of which, the Washington Suburban Region, would comprise Montgomery, Prince George’s and Frederick Counties. (HB 503, p. 5, lines 16-28; SB 430, p. 5, lines 15-29.)

Identification and Allocation of Regional and Local “Housing Infrastructure Gaps.” The State Department of Housing and Community Development and Department of Planning would be required to publish annually, for each region, a “jobs-to-housing” ratio, i.e., the total number of “jobs by place of work” in the region divided by the total number of housing units in the region. Where the ratio for the region exceeds 1.5 there would be a “regional housing infrastructure gap.” (HB 503, p. 5, lines 12-14; p. 6, lines 4-15; SB 430 p. 5, lines 11-13; p. 6, lines 2-13.) 1/ The gap (expressed as the total number of additional housing units “needed for the region to reach a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.5 or less”) then would be apportioned to each county and each incorporated municipality in the region based on its respective “share of regional jobs” (rather than its share of housing units or its contribution, if any, to the “regional housing infrastructure gap”) (HB 503, p. 6, lines 16-22; SB 430, p. 6, lines 14-20.)

The portion of a “regional housing infrastructure gap” (i.e., the number of new housing units required to reduce the entire region’s “jobs-to-housing” to 1.5 or less) apportioned to a “local jurisdiction,” i.e., an individual county or municipality, 2/ would be its “local housing infrastructure gap.” (HB 503, p. 5, lines 7-9; SB 430, p. 5, lines 6-8.) Because gaps would be apportioned based solely on locations of jobs, any county or municipality that has any places of work and is in a region that has a “regional housing infrastructure gap” would have at least a small “local housing infrastructure gap.”

Special Treatment of Housing Development Project Applications Where There Are Local Housing Infrastructure Gaps. Each county or incorporated municipality that has a “local housing infrastructure gap”–

- Would have “an affirmative obligation to expeditiously approve a housing development project application”; and
- Would be prohibited from denying a “housing development project” unless the jurisdiction has a “justification” that –
 - (1) “Clearly outweighs the need for housing;” and
 - (2) “Is supported by clear and convincing evidence.”

(HB 503, p. 10, lines 24-31; SB 430, p. 10, lines 26-29.) The term “housing development project” means “the new construction or substantial renovation of a residential real estate project.” “Housing development project application” is broadly defined to mean “an application for a building permit, a

1/ It is unclear whether a jobs-to-housing ratio of exactly 1.5 would give rise to a “regional housing infrastructure gap.” The definition of “regional housing infrastructure gap” refers to a ratio “below 1.5,” while the provision spelling out the calculations to be made by the Department of Housing and Community Development and Department of Planning refer to a ratio of “1.5 or less.” (Compare HB 503 p. 5 lines 12-14 and SB 430, p. 5, lines 11-13 with HB p. 6, lines 11-15 and SB 430, p. 6, lines 9-13.)

2/ The term “local jurisdiction” is not defined in HB 503/SB 430, but as it is used in the Bill (and is defined, for different purposes, in Md. Code, Land Use §101(i)), the term refers to both counties and incorporated municipalities.

variance, a waiver, a conditional use permit, a special permit, a certification, and authorization, a site plan approval, a subdivision approval, or any other determination by a local jurisdiction relating to a housing development project.” Denial of a “housing development project application” would include denial “at any stage in the development process” as well as imposition of a requirement that a project wait for a year or more before receiving a building permit. (HB 503, p. 9 lines 7-14, 21-28; SB 430, page 9, lines 6-13, 23-27.)

Limited Conditions for Denial of Housing Development Project Applications. In order to deny a “housing development project application” a “local jurisdiction” would be required to establish – by “clear and convincing evidence” – at least one of six narrowly defined justifications:

- (i) That the project would have “a specific adverse impact on the health or safety to the residents that would live in the project” (not the health and safety of neighbors or the community generally); a “specific adverse impact” would have to be “a significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact, based on objective, identified written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions.”
- (ii) That denial of the application or imposition of conditions is required “in order to comply with specific State or federal law”;
- (iii) That the project is “located in an area with inadequate water or sewer facilities to serve the project”;
- (iv) That the project is “located in an area zoned for heavy industrial use,” or is on “conservation property” or “agricultural land”;
- (v) That the project is “located, at the time of application, in a school attendance area that, inter alia, “has been determined by the local jurisdiction, using uniformly verifiable, objective criteria, to have inadequate school capacity”; and
- (vi) “[A]t the time of application submission the project “does not comply with objective written development standards.” Such standards cannot be “subject to personal or subjective judgment by a public official” and must be “uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion . . . ; and . . . applied to facilitate and accommodate development at the density permitted on the site.” (HB 503, p. 10, lines 12-15; p. 11, line 1 – p. 12, line 12; SB 430, p. 10, lines 10-13; p. 11, line 1 – p. 12 line 12).

None of the six justifications would be permissible unless the “local jurisdiction” established that it “clearly outweighs the need for housing.” For justifications (i), (ii) and (vi), the “local jurisdiction” also would be required to establish that there is “no feasible method” to overcome the obstacle to the proposed project without rendering it “financially infeasible.”

Reduction of “Local Housing Infrastructure Gaps.” A local jurisdiction’s “local housing infrastructure gap” could be reduced by 1.5 housing units for each new unit that either meets specified affordable housing criteria or is located within 0.75 miles of a passenger rail station, including a Metro station. (HB 503, p. 7, lines 21-30; SB 430, p. 7, lines 18-27.)

Circuit Court Review. If a “housing development project application” for a project in a “local jurisdiction” that has a “local housing infrastructure gap” is not “expeditiously” approved, or if the applicant/developer contends that the application was denied in a manner that does not comply with

the statutory conditions for denial, the applicant/developer would be authorized to bring an action in Circuit Court to compel the “local jurisdiction” to comply with its obligations. A court would be authorized to enter an order or judgment “requiring the local jurisdiction to take action on the “housing development project” or “directing the local jurisdiction to approve” the project. (HB 503, p. 12 lines 17-29, SB 430, lines 17-29.)

Participation By Affected Residents and Communities. HB 503/SB 430 does not indicate what voice, if any, local residents and communities would have in a local jurisdiction’s decision “expeditiously” to approve or, if applicable, to deny, a “housing development project application” for a project in a “local jurisdiction” that has a “local housing infrastructure gap.” While it expressly authorizes an applicant to sue in Circuit Court to contest a denial, the Bill does not authorize a neighbor or other local resident or a community to contest approval of an application, or to participate in a Circuit Court contest over a denial.

David Johnson. 2-27-2025.pdf

Uploaded by: David Johnson

Position: UNF

Georgetown University Medical Center

LOT E

Visitor Parking Permit

Name:

David Johnson

Date: 2/27/2025

Department requesting parking: **Medical Center Administration**

Department Contact/Phone # **Patty Mazar 412-760-5297**

Authorized by:

Phoebe Smith

Permit Issued by:

plmazar

NOTE: This permit is only good for the designated date/time. Anyone parking with an unauthorized permit will be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense. This permit is only good during FY24-25. (Patricia L. Mazar)

HB 503.pdf

Uploaded by: Eric Rockel

Position: UNF

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

Testimony on State Housing for Jobs Legislation M

Uploaded by: Kevin Bromberg

Position: UNF

Testimony: Housing for Jobs Act SB 0430 and HB 0503

By Kevin Bromberg, a Montgomery County resident

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

House Environmental and Transportation Committee

March 4, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

And Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing to express my **strong opposition** to SB 0430 and HB 0503, also known as the Housing for Jobs Act. This bill is certainly misnamed because it will **NOT** bring housing to the people with jobs who need housing.

Disruption of Single-Family Zoning is Not Justified Nor Designed to Promote Affordable Housing

This proposed legislation would override the careful planning of single-family neighborhoods and is poorly designed to promote affordable housing. The arbitrary trigger of a housing-to-jobs ratio is unlikely to identify the degree or existence of any housing shortfall and fails to account for housing units already in the pipeline.

There is no reason to override our current single-family zoning and certainly no reason to abandon the long-established Master Plan procedures in Montgomery County. There are over 30,000 units in the pipeline of already established units that have not yet been built, which would account for the entire budget allocated to the County under the current bill.

In our neighborhood, we already have more expensive housing replacing affordable housing, and this bill does nothing to change that reality. The legislation would further enable developers to take down naturally affordable housing and substitute high-cost housing, as already happens frequently today. It appears that this bill would merely encourage the construction of more multifamily housing units for sale or rental at market prices, rather than workforce housing. At a minimum, this bill should be restricted to approval of units that cost \$400,000 or less.

Available Evidence Demonstrates that Upzoning Does Not Create Affordable Housing

Research by Michael Storper (UCLA) showed that there is no relationship between upzoning and housing costs; they do not go down. Rising housing costs are the result of other trends, not low-density housing. Upzoning principally benefits high-earning households, contributing to increasing income inequality.

Montgomery County's existing housing policy to provide affordable housing was praised in an August 25, 2023 article in the New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/25/business/affordable-housing-montgomerycounty.html?searchResultPosition=2>. It was also recently praised by NPR. The affordable housing feature is completely absent in the state legislation.

The experience of Minneapolis upending single-family housing also shows that upzoning does not lower housing costs nor produce affordable housing.

Legislation Does Not Protect Parking, Schools, Public Safety and Other Values

This legislation does not protect parking, schools, public safety, environmental concerns, and fiscal responsibility. Indeed, the language that prohibits denials of variances and special permits places no apparent limits on housing units that could overwhelm neighborhoods with no "objective development standards" in place. For example, a jurisdiction would be forced to approve a variance allowing a 60-foot high apartment building within a block of single-family units, where the other stringent exemption requirements would not apply. This is absurd.

To my knowledge, there is **NO** local community association or government that supports this legislation.

Finally, this statute is full of terms that are extremely vague to interpret and apply. For this reason alone, the bill sponsors should withdraw this legislation.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose SB 0430 and HB 0503. Montgomery County's current zoning code has been carefully crafted with input from the affected communities. There has been no demonstration that the current Master Plan process is inadequate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Bromberg

Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

Testimony on SB 430 HB 503 by Lloyd Guerci w Fact

Uploaded by: Lloyd Guerci

Position: UNF

Testimony: Housing for Jobs Act SB 0430 and HB 0503

By Lloyd Guerci, a Montgomery County resident
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
House Environmental and Transportation Committee

March 4, 2025

Position: Opposed

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
and

Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. I have lived in Montgomery County for about 30 years and have been active in land use issues for decades.

Five of the reasons to report unfavorably on these identical Bills, as elucidated below, are:

- This legislation is opposed by many residents.
- These Bills would force Montgomery County to allow various types of multi-family housing in neighborhoods zoned for single-family detached homes. Given an application for a multi-family housing project in a single-family-zoned neighborhood, the County could be required to approve it peremptorily without any consideration of long-standing provisions in its zoning code that address important concerns such as out-of-scale, incompatible multi-family housing structures that loom over neighboring single-family homes; inadequate parking; and standards focused on environmental sustainability such as stormwater management.
- These Bills do not require affordable units in multi-family housing developments or provide developers with incentives to build affordable units.
- The County would be required to devote new governmental resources to resolve whether proposed projects satisfy the provisions of the Bills and to report to the State.
- These Bills lack a necessary foundation to understand how they would apply in the context of very complex zoning codes that balance interests, and how they would work.

There is Substantial Community Opposition to These Bills

The Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH), a coalition of 18 community organizations in southwestern Montgomery County representing about 20,000 residents, opposes this legislation in emails to the Committee chairs.

These Bills Would Enable Multi-Family Housing Development in Neighborhoods Zoned for Single-Family Detached Homes Without Necessary Guardrails or Public Input on Projects.

These Bills would force Montgomery County and other jurisdictions to allow various types of multi-family housing in neighborhoods zoned for single-family detached homes if their assigned region and the individual county have a specified jobs-to-housing ratio. Under these Bills, if a multi-family housing project in a single-family-zoned neighborhood were the subject of a future application, the County could be required to approve it peremptorily without any consideration of long-standing provisions in its zoning code that address important concerns in its single-family neighborhoods.

These include, for example, height and density limitations that prevent construction of out-of-scale, incompatible multi-family housing structures that loom over neighboring single-family homes; on-site parking requirements that reduce the number of vehicles parked on the narrow, one through lane streets that are prevalent in older communities such as where I live; and standards focused on environmental sustainability such as stormwater management.

The Bills' provisions would override zoning code provisions by prohibiting Montgomery and other counties from denying multi-family housing applications on grounds in their codes that include subjective or discretionary criteria rather than objective development standards. Even if based on objective standards, the Bills would further require the jurisdiction to present clear and convincing evidence that its rationale for denial outweighs the need for the proposed housing.

It is critical to understand local zoning. In addition to objective standards, such as those on building height and setbacks, in provisions that allow that construction by right, Montgomery County has discretionary provisions in its complex zoning code for approving multi-family housing in single-family zones. For example, multi-family housing units (e.g., duplexes and townhouses) are allowed as limited uses in single-family zones subject to various discretionary requirements for the optional method of development for both moderately-priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and for cluster housing. In addition, duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings are allowed as conditional uses in single-family zones pursuant to similar discretionary requirements. There are approval processes requiring subjective findings and conclusions.

Under the proposed legislation, if a Montgomery County housing developer applied for approval of a multi-family project as a limited or conditional use on a property in a single-family zone such as the very common residential R-60 zone, it appears that the County would have no choice but to approve the project because the approval standards for those uses in those zones are based on subjective findings and conclusions.

It is necessary to ask what standards would apply to the project? That is unspecified. Would these Bills *give unbridled discretion to the developer*, without limitations that would protect the neighbors? The Bills do provide for input by impacted neighboring property owners on the project.

These are Not Affordable Housing Bills

This legislation would not solve Montgomery County's affordable housing shortfall. It does not require affordable units in multi-family housing developments or provide developers with incentives to build affordable units in such housing.

These Bills Would Impose New, Unfunded Obligations on the County

In an era when County resources are stretched and uncertain, the Bills would also require the County to find and devote new governmental resources to administer applications and resolve claims by developers that proposed projects satisfy the provisions of the Bills.

These Bills Lack a Necessary Foundation to Understand the Circumstances where a State Override of a County Zoning Ordinance Might be Required and How They Bills Would Be Implemented

In informal communications, residents have expressed their concerns on impacts of the Bills to single-family neighborhood. The response, attributed to the Administration, suggests no such impact. The response did not include an analysis or citations. That response appears to be inconsistent with the language of the bills viewed in the context of the Montgomery zoning code. And it begs the question, if the Bills would not override local zoning to produce additional multi-family housing for jurisdictions that have jobs-to-housing ratios above that in the Bills, what's the point?

In addition, the Bills do not consider unintended consequences. There are obvious problems. Once the County's zoning standards are set to the side due to the existence of discretion, what standards apply. Are they sufficient? Has sufficiency been tested by likely scenarios?

The attached FACT SHEET RE "HOUSING FOR JOBS ACT," SB0430 / HB0503 (2025) provides more information on these Bills.

Thank you.

FACT SHEET RE “HOUSING FOR JOBS ACT.” SB0430 / HB0503 (2025)

Q: What is the legislative background of SB0430 and HB0530?

A: The “Housing for Jobs Act of 2025” (HB0503) and a companion Senate Bill (SB0430) were introduced on January 21, 2025, at the request of Governor Wes Moore. The Bills, which have an effective date of January 1, 2026, were referred to the House Environmental and Transportation Committee chaired by Delegate Marc Korman (D-16), and to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee, chaired by Senators Brian Feldman (D-15) and Cheryl Kagan (D-17). The bills are on the hearing schedules for the Senate and House for March 4 at 1 p.m.

According to the Governor, some local jurisdictions have development processes that adversely affect the ability of government agencies, non-profits, and developers to provide the housing, especially multi-family housing, needed to attract jobs. These housing providers are significantly less likely to obtain development approvals for new housing projects where development standards are discretionary and subjective. These non-objective approval standards have also produced a substantial gap between the housing available to support workers seeking jobs in the State and the number of unfilled jobs available to those workers.

The Bills would thus establish strict guidelines intended to reduce the gap between available housing and available jobs by strictly limiting local jurisdictions’ ability to deny housing development applications on any grounds that are discretionary rather than objective, and by requiring clear and convincing evidence that a jurisdiction’s rationale for denying a proposed housing project, even if based on objective standards, outweighs the need for the proposed housing.

This legislation is meeting with strong opposition from numerous single-family neighborhoods across Montgomery County, because it would force local jurisdictions, which includes counties and municipalities, with a jobs to housing gap that exceeds the ratio specified in its provisions to allow various types of multi-family housing in neighborhoods zoned for single-family detached homes based on what are clearly flawed factual assumptions and insufficiently defined approval procedures. In addition, the bills would enable lawyers for well-financed developers to build market-rate projects where there now is lower cost, naturally occurring affordable housing, facilitated by the inability of local residents to afford to participate in the Circuit Court, where under the bills disputes would be resolved.

Q: What are the basic provisions of SB0430 and HB0530?

A: SB0430 and HB0503 would require the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Welfare and the Maryland Department of Planning to divide the State into six regions, with the Washington region comprised of Montgomery, Prince Georges, and Frederick Counties. A “Jobs to Housing Ratio” would then be calculated by dividing the number of jobs by the number of housing units in each region.

If there is a regional housing infrastructure gap, which would exist where the Jobs to Housing Ratio exceeds 1.5, the housing shortfall would be apportioned to the region's local jurisdictions based on their percentage share of regional jobs. Each jurisdiction within the region that contributes to the housing infrastructure gap would then be required to expeditiously approve new housing units unless there is a reason for denial that is specifically authorized in the legislation. However, in calculating the ratio, no consideration would be given to the number of approved new housing units that are in the jurisdiction's "development pipeline" (i.e., housing units on sites within the jurisdiction for which only a building permit is needed for construction).

To justify a denial of a housing application, a local jurisdiction would be required to establish at least one of the following six specific conditions or circumstances:

- (i) Specific adverse impact to the health/safety of residents of the project;
- (ii) Noncompliance with specific State or Federal law;
- (iii) Inadequate water or sewer facilities to serve the project;
- (iv) Location in an area zoned for heavy industrial use, conservation, or agricultural land;
- (v) Insufficient school capacity; or
- (vi) Development does not comply with objective written development standards at the time of application submission.

For all except (iv) and (v) above, the jurisdiction would also have to show that there was "no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact without rendering the housing development project financially infeasible." A "specific adverse impact" would have to be "a significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact, based on objective, identified written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions." Significantly, there are no provisions in the legislation giving the local community any opportunity to be heard on these issues.

The legislation also includes provisions allowing regions to reduce their housing-to-job ratios by providing more housing. For example, each standard housing unit built after its ratio was determined would reduce its regional housing gap on a one-to-one basis. In addition, a local gap reduction of 1.5 units would also be credited for each new unit that either meets specified affordable housing criteria or is within 0.75 miles of a passenger rail station, including a Metro station.

Q: Are multi-family housing units currently permitted by right in Montgomery County's single-family residential zones?

A: No. Only single-family residential units are currently permitted by right in single-family residential detached zones (e.g., R-40, R-60, R-90, R-200) under the current Montgomery County zoning code. Multi-family housing units (e.g., duplexes and townhouses) are only allowed as limited uses subject to the demanding requirements of the optional method of development for moderately-priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and for cluster housing. Duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings are allowed as conditional uses subject to even more demanded procedures for approval.

The procedural standards for conditional uses include detailed applications, public notices (by posting and publication), direct notices to neighbors, public meetings, reports and recommendations by Planning Board staff, public hearings before hearing examiners, and reports and decisions by the hearing examiners, which are subject to appeal to the Board of Appeals, whose decisions are subject to court review.

The optional method of development for multi-family housing in single-family zones requires parcels of three to ten acres, previously approved site plans, and approval by local planning authorities pursuant to complex and time-consuming procedures. The procedures for both conditional uses and the optional method of development also require the decision-maker to make detailed factual findings to support approval.

Q: What are the specific provisions in SB0430 and HB0530 that would allow multi-family units in single-family neighborhoods?

A: SB0430 and HB0503 would turn the County’s zoning code on its head and permit multi-family housing types (duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings) anywhere in single-family zones unless the jurisdiction’s approval process for single-family units is based on totally objective development standards, and the jurisdiction can show that there is no feasible method to comply with the standards without rendering the development financially infeasible. The precise language can be found in Section 12-203E(6), which provides:

(E) A local jurisdiction shall cite at least one of the following as a justification to deny a housing development project application that clearly outweighs the need for housing . . .

(6) (i) The housing development project does not comply with objective written development standards at the time of application submission; and

(ii) there is no feasible method to comply without rendering the development financially infeasible.

Thus, if a housing developer asserts that the provisions in the County zoning code for conditional uses and/or optional method development in single-family zones do not meet the objective standards of Section 12-203E (6) and that there is no feasible method to meet those standards, the developer’s multi-family project in a single-family residential neighborhood would have to be approved.

Q: What are “objective written development standards” that jurisdictions can use to deny multi-family developments in single-family zones?

A: According to the legislation, “objective written development standards” means objective, quantifiable, written development standards, conditions, and policies” that are:

(I) not subject to personal or subjective judgment by a public official;

(II) uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by the housing development project applicant; and

(III) applied to facilitate and accommodate development at the density permitted on the site. (Section 12-203(A)(9)).

These terms -- “objective,” “quantifiable standards,” “conditions,” “not subject to personal or subjective judgment by a public official” – have been criticized as vague and ambiguous, open to abuse and mischaracterization, and clearly in need of further definition. This legislation is the product of poor drafting and should not be seriously considered by either of the House or Senate Committees in its present form.

Q: Are the standards for allowing multi-family units in single-family zones in Montgomery County based on “objective written development standards?”

A: No. As indicated above, multi-family housing units are allowed in Montgomery County only as “condition uses” or pursuant to an optional method of development for MPDUs or cluster housing. The substantive standards for approval of a condition use require the hearing examiner, Board of Appeals, and/or a court to make numerous subjective findings.

These include findings that the proposed development will not cause undue harm to the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value, or the development potential of either abutting and confronting properties or the general neighborhood, or to the health, safety, or welfare of neighboring residents, visitors, or employees.

Under the optional method of development, approval of townhouse MPDUs in a single-family zone require subjective findings that the greater number of living units are “more desirable for environmental reasons” and that the proposed townhouses will be “compatible with adjacent development.” The optional method for cluster development in a single-family zone required a subjective finding that the development “substantially conforms” to the recommendations of the applicable master plan as well as to any design guidelines approved by the Planning Board that implement the applicable master plan.

The standards in the County’s single-family zones thus include provisions for MPDU and cluster development that are discretionary in nature and that require subjective judgments by public officials.

Q: What evidence would show that there is no “feasible method” to comply with the provisions of SB0430 and HB0503 without rendering the proposed multi-family development “financially infeasible?”

A: There is no discussion or definition of what would qualify as either a “feasible” or “financially infeasible” multi-family housing development. However, anyone familiar with financial statements that forecast future revenues and expenses, even those prepared using “GAAP” accounting principles, understands that they are based on numerous assumptions, estimates, and projections that can significantly exaggerate the very metrics they are intended to disclose. Thus, it is distinctly possible that housing developers could provide public officials with misleading – even grossly inaccurate – economic “feasibility” analyses.

Q: What additional information or clarification of SB0430 and HB0503 is necessary to enable members of the Maryland legislature, as well as their Montgomery County constituents, to understand its terms and potential impacts on the County’s single-family neighborhoods?

A: If passed by the Maryland Legislature as currently drafted, SB0430 and HB0503 are likely to be challenged in Maryland courts as “void for vagueness.” The following is a list of questions regarding some of the operational and definitional issues that need to be addressed before the legislations can be seriously considered by the relevant House and Senate Committees:

- Why was the 1.5 Jobs to Housing Ratio selected as the trigger for permitting multi-family housing units in communities that are zoned for single-family residential housing?
- Why aren’t approved housing units that are in a jurisdiction’s “development pipeline” included in the calculation of the Jobs to Housing Ratios (i.e., approved housing units on sites within the jurisdiction for which only a building permit is needed for construction)?
- Why do the reasons for denial that involve the legislation’s potential impacts on single-family neighborhoods include only lack of water, sewer, and school capacity?”
- How will the new legislation operate procedurally?
 - For example, what would be the process for deciding whether a local jurisdiction’s zoning code standards for single-family zoning are based on “objective written development standards” that are “quantifiable,” “uniformly based on external and uniform benchmarks” that are “available and knowable” by “a public official?”
 - What would be the criteria for deciding whether a specific adverse impact is a “significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact based on objective, identified, written public health or safety standards, policies or conditions?”
 - What would be the process for deciding whether a proposed housing project either is “feasible” or “infeasible?”
 - What would be the process for the local jurisdiction to object to or rebut a housing developer’s arguments that the jurisdiction wrongfully denied a proposed multi-family housing development?
 - Would residents of the affected neighborhoods be afforded an opportunity to be heard on a proposal to locate a multi-family housing development in their community?

- Finally, would this legislation incentivize developers to build more affordable housing types, such as MPDUs and/or workforce housing (other than affordable units which reduce s jurisdiction's Jobs to Housing Ratio), or would it merely encourage construction of more multi-family housing units for sale or rental at market prices?

letter re Jobs Act, HB503, SB0430.pdf

Uploaded by: Patricia Johnson

Position: UNF

February 27th

Dear Delegates Korman, Wolek, Woorman, Senators Love, Kagan and Hester:

I am a resident and voting citizen of Montgomery County. I am writing to you to ask you, our representatives, to strongly oppose and reject the proposed Jobs Act, HB 0503 and SB0430. I ask you to oppose these confusing bills for the following reasons:

According to the State Department of Housing and Community Development: Montgomery County has a “local housing infrastructure gap” of 31,364 homes/ to jobs. In the current Federal climate of mass firing, that ratio is a useless number. In fact, the Council of Governments has documented an exodus of 21000 persons leaving the area since 2023. People are leaving because there are no jobs that pay at a middle income level.

Another fact that belies the jobs to housing ratio is the 35,000 approved, un-built dwelling units, according to the Development Pipeline data published by the County Planning Board. These units are already approved and need building permits pulled. If the State Department acknowledged these un-built dwelling units as housing units, the County would not have a “local housing infrastructure gap”.

Counties and municipalities should not be required to upend well-established land use planning, zoning and building regulation processes based on the false premise that those processes have caused housing shortages. The problem is jobs not houses. You don't move to Montgomery County or any jurisdiction in Maryland for a house. You move to the state for a job. We need jobs. Montgomery County's J.O.B.S. Initiative subsidized by \$20,000,000, has produced only 30 jobs in the area since it was introduced 3/4/24. The county and state have to attract business. In this current political climate people are losing jobs which is terrible news with Maryland facing a 3 billion dollar deficit.

The bill puts the onus on the county/municipality to ‘weigh the need for housing’ to close a theoretical ‘local housing infrastructure gap’ over a ‘specific adverse impact’ on the public, health or safety of a project's residents. We have Master Plans in place currently that do this. The bills are confusing and open to wildly differing interpretations. They also represent an additional financial burden on a county or municipality to put in place the bureaucracy to monitor and control these housing project development applications. These bills are poorly written and hard to understand. What is even more difficult to understand is the need for these sweeping edicts that undermine an established order when the state is in great debt and jobs are getting more scarce with each passing day.

I urge you to vote against these proposed measures.

Sincerely,
Patricia D. Johnson
5301 Oakland Road
Chevy Chase, Md. 20815

TestimonyONSB0430HB0503.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Jarosinski

Position: UNF

Unfavorable report on HB0503/SB0430

There have historic changes in job market in Maryland in the last four weeks and the Federal Government has announced even more dramatic layoffs in the near future. These changes, in addition to my comments below, make SB0430 and HB 0503 even more inappropriate now than when the bills were first introduced. I would urge you to consider these points and withdraw these bills from the current General Assembly session. There is no good reason to compromise our existing communities now for this legislation especially with job reductions already occurring within the State. The underlying provided reason for this legislation has evaporated!

The Governor's brochure cites a Chamber of Commerce report that there are currently only 33 workers for every 100 jobs in Maryland. Part of the reason for this is the statewide effort to defund the police or tie their enforcement allowances. This has created large gaps in police numbers all over the State especially in MoCo. Similarly, the projected need for 15,000 new teachers to implement the wildly expensive Blue Print for Education artificially increases the projected need. Housing cannot be blamed for worker shortages such as these and recent Federal layoffs make the 33 workers for 100 jobs no longer valid.

One wonders how many of you have read the Chamber of Commerce reference that is in Governor's Moore brochure as it is critical information and only a five-minute read? Please take the time to use the link below and read that reference!

If you go to the link supplied below from the Governor's brochure, you will see that there are a myriad of reasons given for why business is failing in Maryland:
"... a critical loss of competitiveness across multiple factors that businesses consider when deciding where to locate and grow."

Listed reasons for a decline in our economic competitiveness are:

- Deteriorating Business Climate
- Infrastructure Deficiencies
- Prohibitive Costs of Doing Business
- Stagnant Workforce Development
- Regional Competition

Do you notice what isn't mentioned as a reason for Maryland's economic decline?

Housing!

It appears Mr. Moore is trying to blame Housing for all of the STATE economic failures listed in the Chamber article. Note that there are multiple non-housing failures under each of the categories above!

<https://www.mdchamber.org/2024/10/09/charting-marylands-economic-competitiveness-spotlight-on-business-friendliness/>

Earlier this week UMBC published a poll entitled: "Poll: Majority of Marylanders say they have considered exiting the State." "The poll sheds some light on potential reasons for the exodus from Maryland, including lack of "good paying jobs," business climate, and being a good place to retire." Housing again was NOT listed even mentioned as a concern.

In short, there is no foundation for blaming Housing as the cause of Maryland's business crisis. These two bills would only open the potential to compromise the zoning in our existing communities that would further escalate the flight of people out of the State of

Maryland. I have lost many friends and now family members to more tax friendly states. We join the Montgomery County Executive, the Maryland Association of County, and most, if not all, civic associations in Montgomery County in urging you to reject SB0430 and HB 0503 as well as other bills that are attacking our HOA Covenants and zoning laws including HB1234. Let's stop chasing people out of the County/State for greener pastures! It is no wonder our tax base is eroding and we have a fiscal crisis! Instead I urge you to address the business points in the Chamber of Commerce article, cut the spending especially the grant giveaways (e.g. Why does the State give the Olney Theater millions of dollars every year – seems like legislators are picking the winners and losers), and balance the budget like we do at home – cut the spending to match our current income.

As far as the housing concerns should one still exist after all the Federal layoffs, deportations, and reassignments to other geographical regions, build affordable units in urban areas near transit and other amenities so that people would not be dependent on an automobile to meet all their needs. There is no affordable housing in this proposal. With 30,000 to 50,000 layoffs expected in Maryland this Spring, there is certainly no shortage of people looking for a job as there may have been when Governor Moore wrote these bills. The real estate market has already slowed in DC and Maryland is expected to follow as layoffs accumulate.

Lastly, at a community meeting of 40 community leaders in Bethesda earlier this week, there was unanimous agreement that bills SB0430/HB0503 were terribly inappropriate at this time given the Chamber of Commerce report and the mounting Federal layoffs on top of pending deportations. One community leader lamented that most of our Democratic representatives were likely to vote for these bills anyway because few, if any, had the independence and fortitude to talk to the Governor about the current issues and how this bill is only likely to lead to a further exodus of people from the State of Maryland. It would be an even greater tragedy if our elected officials were fearful of talking to the Governor about why bills he submitted months ago are no longer appropriate given the changing economic circumstances. Let's shelve this legislation and concentrate on the budget shortfall and the economic deficiencies elucidated by the Chamber of Commerce.

Paul Jarosinski, President
Cherrywood HOA

HB503.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard Tabuteau

Position: UNF

MOCo NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

TO: The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Members, House Environment & Transportation Committee
The Moore-Miller Administration

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 4, 2025

RE: **UNFAVORABLE** – House Bill 503 – *Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)*

MoCo Neighborhood Preservation Alliance is dedicated to protecting and preserving the character, stability, and quality of life in Montgomery County's single-family neighborhoods. We advocate for responsible growth policies that respect established communities, safeguard green spaces, and maintain the integrity of residential areas. Our mission is to ensure that future development enhances not disrupts the peaceful, family-friendly environments that make our neighborhoods special. By fostering civic engagement, promoting thoughtful planning, and working with local leaders, we strive to keep Montgomery County a place where families can thrive for generations to come.

House Bill 503 requires the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Department of Planning to divide the State into six regions, with the Washington region comprising Montgomery, Prince Georges, and Frederick Counties. A "Jobs to Housing Ratio" would then be calculated by dividing the number of jobs by the number of housing units in each region. If there is a regional housing infrastructure gap, which would exist where the jobs-to-housing ratio exceeds 1.5, the housing shortfall would be apportioned to the region's local jurisdictions based on their percentage share of regional jobs.

Each jurisdiction within the region would then be required to expeditiously approve new housing units, except in extremely limited and narrow circumstances. Notably, these exceptions do not include the legitimate concerns of local residents. Even in citing one of the enumerated exceptions, a jurisdiction's justification for denying a housing development project must also be supported by clear and convincing evidence, the highest and most demanding standard of proof in civil matters.

According to data shared by the Administration, under this legislation, 31,364 units would have to be constructed in Montgomery County alone for the Washington Region to fall below the prescribed jobs-to-housing ratio. House Bill 503, however, does not allow the county to deny a housing development project for any of the following important and legitimate considerations:

- Traffic conditions, road quality, commute times to work, and parking;

- Reliable electricity and internet connectivity;
- Sufficient emergency services (*e.g.* police, fire, medical response);
- Access to green spaces, playgrounds, sports facilities, and community centers; or
- Clean air, low noise levels, and recycling services and other environmental sustainability programs.

Moreover, House Bill 503 shifts the burden of proof for the approval of a housing development project so that a local jurisdiction needs to demonstrate why a project should not be approved, instead of for the developer to demonstrate why it should be approved. By shifting the burden of proof onto local jurisdictions, developers are not incentivized to provide thorough and complete proposals, utilize best practices, or exceed expectations. In addition, developers may bring an action in the appropriate circuit court to contest disapproval of a project, but there is no corresponding legal process in the bill for opponents of the project to participate in that contest.

Furthermore, the use of a jobs-to-housing ratio itself is problematic. First, this ratio does not provide any housing affordability protections whatsoever and could unintentionally result in raising the cost of living in Montgomery County. Second, the ratio is easily manipulated to produce false or misleading results. For example, many people in Montgomery County work multiple jobs, which would skew the number of housing units needed for the workforce. Conversely, Montgomery County faces the imminent prospect of tens of thousands of lost federal government jobs held by county residents, which would rapidly skew ratio calculations.

Though the Administration has rightly identified housing availability and affordability as an issue to spur economic growth in Maryland, House Bill 503 is the wrong solution. MoCo Neighborhood Preservation Alliance strongly urges the House Environment & Transportation Committee to give House Bill 503 an unfavorable report.

For more information call:

Richard A. Tabuteau
347.886.2904

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Uploaded by: Clark Wagner

Position: INFO



March 6, 2025

Delegate Mark A. Korman, Esq.
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD 21401

Sent via Email March 6, 2025

RE: Mount Airy Town Council Denies Housing for Mount Airy Crossing Development, Mt. Airy, MD

Dear Delegate Korman:

Relative to the **Housing for Jobs Act SB430/ HB503**, critical legislation to promote new housing in Maryland, we would like to bring to your attention an example of where a new housing project proposed in Mt. Airy, MD has been rejected by the local Town Council. Our team has worked very hard and in good faith throughout the over 18-month Pre-Concept Planning process, modifying our development plans after each successive phase of public input. Each subsequent submission included fewer dwelling units and greater open space for an overall **40% reduction in housing** accompanied by a **27% increase in open space**, while maintaining the highest degree of design excellence. The following is a summary of the process that was undertaken in Mt. Airy.

October 2022	Original Plan Submission (1 st Plan)
January 2023	First Charrette - Several hours of public comment
May 2023	Second 3-day Interactive Charrette (requested by Town Council)
July 2023	Second Plan Submission (2 nd Plan) – Response to public comments
September 2023	Public Hearing - 2 days of public comments
December 2023	Third Plan Submission (3 rd Plan) - Response to public hearing comments
February 2024	Joint Workshop - 120 questions/comments from Council/Planning Commission
March 2024	Fourth Plan Submission (4 th Plan) – Response to Joint Workshop comments
April 2024	Town Council Declined Additional Joint Workshops to Discuss 4 th Submission
May 2024	Town Council Denied Plan by vote of 3-1-1

The Pre-Concept Plan ultimately denied included a total of 350 dwelling units (reduced from 582) of various types and sizes along with 135,200 Sq. Ft. of commercial space in keeping with the requirements of the Mixed Use District (MXD) Zone. The housing density proposed was 3.8 units/acre representing just 54% of the maximum allowed density in this zone (7 units/acre). The open space was 35.7% of the net developable area in excess of what is required by both the zone and the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO).

In addition, the Town Council modified several ordinances during this process that forced our team to make substantial revisions to the plan. This included lowering the density cap from 8/acre to 7/acre and increasing the open space requirement from 10% to 30% in the MXD Zone, along with modifying the open space requirement in the APFO, as well as changing the requirements related to providing a new water source for the project. These ordinance changes are all complied with despite the fact that they occurred subsequent to our initial plan submission in October 2022 and the two charrettes held in 2023.

In summary, we have repeatedly demonstrated good faith by our efforts to comply with a multistep process and a Town Code that was being modified as we progressed through the Pre-Concept Sketch Plan approval process, by our willingness to modify our plan after each successive stage of public input, and finally, by our plan being in full compliance with the purpose and every objective of the MXD Zone.

This is an example of how local governments can hinder the ability of developers and builders to provide the kind of housing that Maryland needs to meet the ever growing demand. New legislation and new policy directives should be developed at the state level that will prevent this kind of thing from happening throughout Maryland.

Sincerely,

PLEASANTS DEVELOPMENT, LLC



Clark Wagner, Vice President, Land Acquisition & Entitlement

CC: Land Use & Ethics Subcommittee
William D. Pleasants, Jr.
Jerry Connelly
Dan Fryer