

SB4 Hayes FIN.pdf

Uploaded by: Antonio Hayes

Position: FAV

ANTONIO HAYES
Legislative District 40
Baltimore City

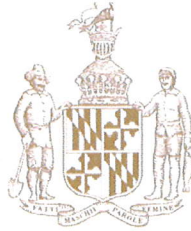
Vice Chair
Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committees

Administrative, Executive, and
Legislative Review

Unemployment Insurance Oversight



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 223
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3656
800-492-7122 Ext. 3656
Antonio.Hayes@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Monday January 20, 2025

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0004: West North Avenue Development Authority -
Alterations**

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 4, which seeks to enhance the administration and membership of the West North Avenue Development Authority. Established in 2021, the Authority was created to advance housing, economic development, transportation, and neighborhood revitalization along the 600–3200 blocks of West North Avenue.

On Wednesday, January 31, 2024, the Authority submitted the West North Avenue Comprehensive Plan, which outlines strategies to promote restorative justice and equitable community development. The plan focuses on enhancing housing, public spaces, mobility, and economic opportunities for one of Baltimore City's most disadvantaged areas.

Senate Bill 4 clarifies the powers and duties of the Authority while instituting necessary limitations. It also exempts the Authority from certain legal provisions, requires specific actions related to its financial operations, and provides tax exemptions under defined circumstances. Furthermore, the bill establishes the West North Avenue Development Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund to support these initiatives.

This legislation is a critical step toward fostering sustainable development and addressing historical inequities in our city. I urge you to support Senate Bill 4 to help advance the transformative vision for West North Avenue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Senator Antonio L. Hayes
40th Legislative District – MD



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Addressing Baltimore's Vacant Housing At Scale

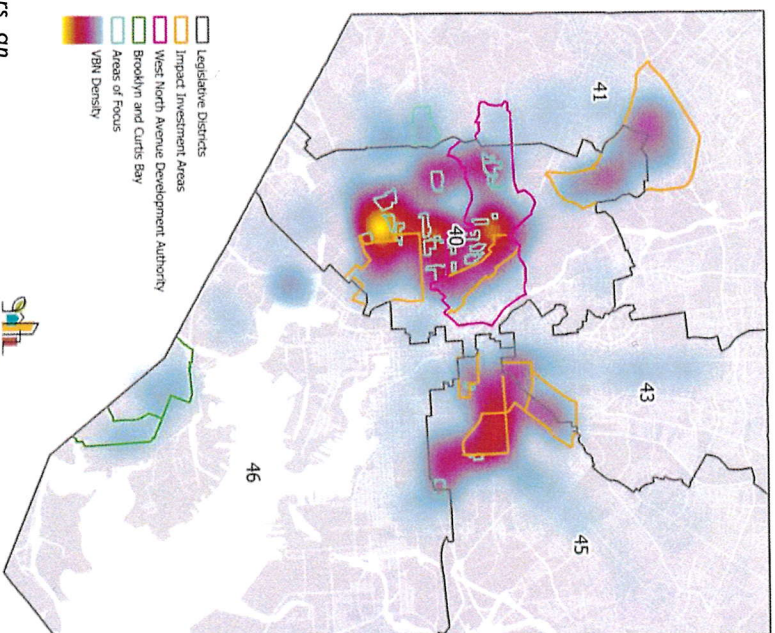
City / State Partnership Model

Presentation to the City Delegation, December 19, 2023

To comprehensively address concentrated areas of vacants across Baltimore, we've developed a \$3.0B** plan that will impact at least 37,500 properties over 15 years

District 40 (56% VBNS)
 15,399 property interventions
 \$1.06B invested
 7,815 VBNS

District 41 (8.1% VBNS)
 2,615 property interventions
 \$162.6M invested
 1,121 VBNS



District 43 (4.9% VBNS)
 850 property interventions
 \$124.6M invested
 679 VBNS

District 45 (23.6% VBNS)
 4,628 property interventions
 \$461.8M invested
 3,264 VBNS

District 46 (6.8% VBNS)
 1,342 property interventions
 \$82.5M invested
 934 VBNS

** Investment by district shows \$2B in first ten years, on additional \$1B will be programmed in years 11 - 15



Vacant Property Financial Modeling

Investing in at least 37,500 properties

NEIGHBORHOOD	Demolition	Acquisition	Stabilization	Live/Work Incentive	Developer Incentives	Homebuyer Down Payment Incentives	Home Repair Incentives	Infrastructure	Total
BROADWAY EAST	\$14,348,700	\$79,303,250	\$9,018,000	\$329,000	\$7,179,000	\$4,786,000	\$6,490,500	\$102,500,000	\$223,954,450
CHM	\$9,696,300	\$15,422,000	\$1,404,000	\$570,500	\$4,641,000	\$3,094,000	\$13,779,000	\$102,500,000	\$151,106,800
EBM	\$1,113,600	\$22,292,900	\$2,808,000	\$1,326,500	\$6,033,000	\$4,022,000	\$6,262,500	\$102,500,000	\$146,358,500
JOHNSTON SQUARE	\$882,600	\$19,629,900	\$1,080,000	\$238,000	\$2,784,000	\$1,856,000	\$2,272,500	\$102,500,000	\$128,243,000
PARK HEIGHTS	\$4,988,700	\$32,100,700	\$3,456,000	\$108,500	\$9,399,000	\$6,266,000	\$33,948,000	\$102,500,000	\$192,766,900
SWP	\$17,059,500	\$47,260,000	\$4,590,000	\$1,904,000	\$9,705,000	\$6,470,000	\$14,796,000	\$102,500,000	\$204,284,500
WEST	\$6,537,900	\$53,958,450	\$6,318,000	\$2,198,000	\$19,053,000	\$12,702,000	\$8,304,000	\$102,500,000	\$211,571,350
AREAS OF FOCUS	\$3,157,500	\$114,870,500	-	\$5,390,000	\$9,735,000	\$3,002,000	\$35,107,500	\$80,000,000	\$232,562,500
BROOKLYN	\$739,500	\$11,271,000	\$560,000	\$1,666,000	\$1,836,000	\$1,224,000	\$10,633,500	\$21,250,000	\$49,792,000
CURTIS BAY	\$484,500	\$9,226,750	\$350,000	\$595,000	\$1,224,000	\$816,000	\$6,171,000	\$21,250,000	\$40,525,250
WNDA	\$6,744,000	\$161,521,600	\$4,144,000	\$4,578,000	\$16,827,000	\$11,218,000	\$51,756,000	\$228,250,000	\$485,038,600
Additional Investment, years 11 - 15									1,000,000,000
Total	\$65,752,800	\$455,019,600	\$33,728,000	\$18,903,500	\$88,416,000	\$55,456,000	\$189,520,500	\$1,068,250,000	\$3,066,203,850

SB4_SponsorAmendment

Uploaded by: Antonio Hayes

Position: FAV



SB0004/823322/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

22 JAN 25
12:17:17

BY: Senator Hayes
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 4
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 9, in line 19, after "DOMAIN" insert "EXCEPT FOR OWNER-OCCUPIED
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES".

SB4_BCSD Letter_FAV

Uploaded by: Baltimore City Senate Delegation

Position: FAV

BALTIMORE CITY SENATE DELEGATION

MARY L. WASHINGTON, Chair

Legislative District 43

ANTONIO HAYES

Legislative District 40

VACANT

Legislative District 41

CORY V. MCCRAY

Legislative District 45

BILL FERGUSON, Senate President

Legislative District 46



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 104
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 21, 2025

The Honorable Senator Pamela Beidle, Chair
Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Economic Development – West North Avenue Development Authority – Alterations (SB4)

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Committee Members,

On Monday, January 20, 2025, the Baltimore City Senate Delegation voted Favorable on Senate Bill 4 Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations favorable. Please see the attached voting roster.

Pursuant to Senate customs, we ask the Finance Committee to bring SB4 to a vote. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office or the offices of my colleagues regarding this legislation. Thank you for your kind consideration of our position regarding this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary L. Washington".

Senator Mary L. Washington, PH.D

BALTIMORE CITY SENATE DELEGATION

MARY L. WASHINGTON, Chair

Legislative District 43

ANTONIO HAYES

Legislative District 40

VACANT

Legislative District 41

CORY V. MCCRAY

Legislative District 45

BILL FERGUSON, Senate President

Legislative District 46



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 104
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Voting Record – 2025 Regular Session

Date: January 20, 2025

Bill/Resolution Number: SB4

Title: Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

Sponsor: Senator Hayes

Motion: Favorable

Senator	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Washington, Mary – Chair	✓			
Ferguson, Bill	✓			
Hayes, Antonio	✓			
McCray, Cory				✓

SB4_WNADA_FAV

Uploaded by: Chad Williams

Position: FAV



SB4/HB258

West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

Chad Williams
Executive Director

Senate
Finance Committee

SB 4

Wednesday, January 22, 2025 – 3:45 PM

House of Delegates

Ways and Means Committee

HB 258

Thursday, January 30, 2025 – 1:00 PM

West North Avenue Development Authority

Good Afternoon, Chair, Vice-Chair, and other members of the Committee. For the record, Chad Williams, Executive Director of the West North Avenue Development Authority and resident of Baltimore City. I'm here to testify in support of SB4 (sponsored by Senator Antonio Hayes) cross-filed with HB258 (sponsored by Melissa Wells).

The Maryland General Assembly established the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA), on October 1, 2021, to create a comprehensive plan for housing, economic, transportation, and neighborhood development along the West North Avenue corridor in Baltimore City between the 600 - 3200 block, defined as the Target Area, and 250 yards surrounding the Target Area, defined as the Buffer Zone.

This bill will provide the necessary powers and authorities, as intended by the General Assembly, for the agency to support legislative priorities of housing affordability, economic opportunity through career readiness (which is a component of the Maryland Blueprint for Education), reliable public transportation that connects workers to regional jobs and creates transit-oriented development destination sites and improves public safety for neighborhoods to thrive with open green space and culture engagement.

The bill will provide the West North Avenue Development Authority with the powers and authorities to improve property, sales and income tax revenue for Baltimore City and contribute to the increase of sales tax revenue for the surrounding counties in the Baltimore region as the population and income within Baltimore City increases.

The bill does not mandate funding for the authority. Therefore, no funds have been included in our agency's proposed operating or capital budget in "specific" anticipation of this legislation. For example, Article 12-703 (D) reads, THE GOVERNOR MAY INCLUDE EACH YEAR IN THE STATE BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION TO THE WEST NORTH AVENUE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY IN BALTIMORE CITY. (SB4/HB0258, Page 3. Lines 25 – 27.). Also, the agency has not submitted a supplemental budget for funds in anticipation of this legislation.

The alterations to the Economic Development Act for the West North Avenue Development Authority contained in SB4/HB258 include the following:

- 1) **Define certain terms, such as Authority, Board and West North Avenue Corridor.** (Section 12-701)
- 2) **Identify the Authority as a body politic and corporate and an instrumentality of the state.** (Section 12-702)
- 3) **Make certain legislative findings about the West North Avenue Corridor indicating a need for residential and commercial development or redevelopment in furtherance of the public interest, and that revitalization of areas within the Corridor an essential governmental function and is a public use that will confer a public benefit on citizens of Baltimore [this finding is important to justify WNADA's power of eminent domain]. It finds that the Authority is the economic development authority for the State to benefit the neighborhoods of Baltimore City within the target area.**
- 4) **It describes the legislative purposes of the Authority** (economic revival within the Corridor) and the legislative intent behind creation of the Authority, which includes a provision clarifying that the Authority should only own and operate a project if the private sector has not demonstrated enough significant interest and capacity to do so, or if another governmental unit requests it. (Section 12-704)
- 5) **It provides that the Authority may carry out its legislative purposes without the consent of another State unit** (with some exceptions described below). The Authority would be exempt from the following provisions of the State Code:

- a. Title 12, subtitle 1-3 of the Economic Development (EC) Article, (Department of Commerce) which includes the following agencies: Maryland Economic Development Commission; Economic Development and Business Resources; Secretary of Commerce and Department of Economic Competitiveness.
- b. Title 12, subtitle 2 of the EC Article, which deals with certain bonds issued by local governments and other special funds that may be created for certain economic development purposes in a local area;
- c. Title 12, subtitle 3 of the EC Article governs bonds issued by local governments for redevelopment of blighted areas;
- d. Title 2, subtitle 2 of the State Finance & Procurement (SFP) Article This exemption would allow the Authority to accept and spend certain gifts or grants without the gifts or grants being accepted by the Governor and appropriated to the Authority by the Legislature first. **It would allow the Authority to not have to go to the Dept of Planning and report federal aid, including grants, instructional contracts, instructional grants, loans, research contracts, or other assistance.** May accept and dispose of any surplus food given by the Federal government.
- e. Title 2, subtitle 5 of the SFP Article is the “MD Facilities for the Handicapped Act”, and governs the standards that State buildings must meet. **[WNADA will generally be assisting in the redevelopment of properties that are not intended to be State facilities].**
- f. Title 3, SFP Article—Department of Budget & Management (DBM) reviews and manages the State’s capital projects (projects constructed using proceeds of State general obligation bonds). **WNADA is not projected to have capital projects.**

Title 4, SFP Article—Department of General Services (DGS) DGS handles real property acquisitions, maintenance, and dispositions for State property. **This exemption would allow the Authority to acquire and dispose of real property independent of DGS.** However, ***“THE AUTHORITY SHOULD NOT OWN AND OPERATE A PROJECT, UNLESS THE BOARD DETERMINES BY RESOLUTION THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED SERIOUS AND SIGNIFICANT INTEREST AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY TO OWN AND OPERATE THE PROJECT; OR A REPRESENTATIVE OF A GOVERNMENTAL UNIT REQUESTS IN WRITING THAT THE AUTHORITY OWN AND OPERATE THE PROJECT.”***

- g. ” – SB1005/HB1427. The State of Maryland is represented on the Board by the Maryland Secretaries of Commerce, Housing and Community Development, Transportation, the Executive Director of the Maryland Economic Development Corporation, and Governor. The City of Baltimore is represented by the Directors of Housing and Community Development, Planning, Transportation, the CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation, and Mayor. Therefore, any acquisition of property will be thoroughly vetted by representatives of the two government entities involved in the decisions of the Authority.
- h. Title 5A—Division of Historical & Cultural Programs in the Department of Planning. **This would exempt the Authority’s projects from review by the MD Historical Trust, which monitors and preserves State historical properties. While the Authority values the preservation of historical properties, an alternative to the statutory process can be set out in an intra-agency agreement between the Authority and the MD Historical Trust to consult on any property that may qualify as historical.**

- i. Title 6, SFP Article, subtitle 1—State Board of Revenue Estimates. This Board studies State tax revenues. **The Authority will not be collecting State revenues.**
 - j. Title 7 SFP Article, subtitle 1—State Operating Budget During the preparation of a proposed budget, the Governor reviews, thoroughly and in detail, the recommendations of the Spending Affordability Committee. WNADA is exempt from the Spending Affordability Committee. **WNADA is allowed to carry over unspent funds/balances.**
 - k. Title 10, SFP Article—Board of Public Works (BPW)—Miscellaneous Provisions. The Authority is exempt from going to BPW for approval to dispose of or transfer property and being under the continuous general jurisdiction of BPW.
- 6) Division II, SFP Article—General Procurement Law The Authority is exempt from State procurement law except the requirement that it adopt its own procurement policies and procedures, which it has already done. (See reference below)
 - 7) The Authority is subject to the Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act.
 - 8) The Public Information Act allows the public to review public documents after it is requested while protecting legitimate government interest and the privacy rights of individual citizens.
 - 9) Open Meetings Act requires many State and local public bodies to hold their meetings in public, to give the public adequate notice.
 - 10) The Authority, its officers and its employees are subject to Public Ethic Laws. Requires disclosure of the financial affairs of public officials and sets standards of conduct for the State and local government officials and employees. (Section 12-705)
 - 11) **12-706 Clarifies that the two (2) resident members of the board must come from east and west of Fulton Avenue.**
 - 12) Section 12-710 Itemizes all of the Authority of WNADA, which includes, but is not limited to: Adopt a seal, adopt bylaws for the conduct of business, sue or be sued, accept and manage loans, grants from Federal, State or local government, college, university, charitable institution, nonprofit and for-profit organization.
 - 13) Authority could acquire properties by purchase or government enforcement. Sell property, lend money, set salaries.
 - 14) **Section 12-711 Allows the Authority to open a bank account, establish systems of financial accounting, controls, audits and reports.**
 - 15) **Section 12-713. The Authority is exempt from any taxation or assessments on any part of its projects, activities, or revenues, and is exempt from state and local transfer and recordation taxes. (But any part of a project sold or leased to a private entity would become subject to City and local real property taxes from the time of its sale or lease.)**
 - 16) **Section 12-714 Creates a fund to use for consulting fees, salaries, administrative costs, and to carry out the legislative purposes of the Authority. The fund consists of money appropriated in the State budget to the fund, earns interest in addition to any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the fund.**

- 17) The Authority is exempt from Title 12, Subtitle of the State Finance & Procurement Article, (12-401 – Written Policies & Procedures for Exempt Units. Procurement Exemption. (Section 12-705)
- 18) **This legislation repeals the termination date of September 30, 2026, to accommodate real property acquisitions, maintenance, and dispositions for State property. However, the General Assembly will always have the power to dissolve this state agency.**

As stated in the Fiscal Note these expanded powers and authorities will allow WNADA to generate revenue (for the State and Baltimore City), which may eventually lead to the authority being self-supporting. In addition, MBEs will continue to positively benefit from the existing Procurement Div. II exemption of the agency. For example, WNADA's overall MBE/WBE percentage for FY24 was 45.8% exceeding the State's goal of 29% by 17 percentage points. Specifically, WNADA awarded \$9,500,000 (rounded) in grants with \$5,000,000 (rounded) or 52% directly to MBEs. Additionally, WNADA awarded and spent \$1,415,430.26 on other procurements (consultants, small procurements, & executed contracts) with \$284,716.63 or 20.11% of funds spent directly with MBE/WBEs. The FY2024 grand total for overall spend is \$11,415,430.26 with \$5,229,601.86 directly for MBE/WBEs.

In essence this bill codifies the intent of the General Assembly as recommended by the Office of the Attorney General which represents the first holistic planning and economic development entity in the country to address the negative effects of "Redlining". These policies created devastating long-term economic, housing, transportation, and neighborhood neglect in the historic old West Baltimore communities which eventually created the "Black Butterfly" effect in Baltimore City within the Authority's catalyst area includes 56% of the vacancies of residential and commercial properties in Baltimore City impede the State and City from fully realizing its economic growth potential through revenue derived from property, sales, and income taxes.

The 16 resource-rich, but underinvested neighborhoods lining the West North Avenue contain some of the most undervalued, but high-potential communities in Baltimore City, represented by the deep care and devotion that residents and merchants have shown towards this area and the ever-growing presence of educational, cultural, and civic institutions. WNADA has been charged with a mission by the Maryland General Assembly to realize the long-missed potential of the West North Avenue Corridor.

The [comprehensive plan](#) of the West North Avenue Development Authority seeks to advance restorative justice and community development by implementing strategies that enhance housing, public space, mobility, and economic opportunity for West North Avenue. Our approach works to address disparities caused by persistent racial and economic discrimination, historic disinvestment and predatory practices which have led to adverse outcomes for West Baltimore's community, particularly the Black community.

We seek to mitigate the broken trust between residents and institutions due to past harm, and forge new, strong, interdependent ties among the people of West North Avenue. Our work understands that diversity is not just about representation, but also about ensuring inclusion and delegated power in decision-making and material redistribution.

As such, it is vital that this plan advances equitable development opportunities throughout West Baltimore that empower local actors, leverage local knowledge, and prioritize the needs of residents in the community who have experienced harm. Robust participation in the planning and implementation processes will help heal old wounds by ensuring that plan outcomes are truly representative of local values and community character.

This work prioritizes the most vulnerable members of the community by realizing the benefits of new development through inclusive and responsible growth and by avoiding the adverse effects of displacement, social tension, cultural dilution, and exacerbation of economic hardship.

The connectivity among housing, economic development, transportation, and green space is crucial to the West North Avenue Development Authority's holistic revitalization approach. These components mutually influence and shape the quality of life, socioeconomic opportunities, and overall well-being of communities.

The availability of multi-market and quality housing will attract more residents and businesses to the West North Avenue Corridor, fueling economic growth and development. To sustain such economic progress and growth, multi-modal transportation will be the key to connecting people to job opportunities, educational institutions, healthcare services, and other essential amenities, which will further facilitate economic activity and ensure that communities are thriving. Additionally, green spaces such as parks and gardens contribute to community well-being by providing opportunities for recreation, improving air quality, and enhancing the overall livability of a community.

By integrating each of these elements into our revitalization strategy and developing a procurement policy and [grant manual](#) that increases MBE and small business preferred opportunities, our approach fosters an inclusive, sustainable, and vibrant future for the residents of West Baltimore as we support economic development, promote environmental sustainability, and create places where people want to live, work, and enjoy their lives while increasing the property, sales, and income tax revenue for the State and Baltimore City.

These efforts will make the State of Maryland and Baltimore City safer, affordable, and competitive by advancing educational economic career readiness opportunities in construction, manufacturing, transportation, retail, entrepreneurship and technology, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing green space for families to enjoy the growth of their publicly safe neighborhoods.

Therefore, I respectfully request a favorable report of SB4 cross-filed with HB258. Thank you.

SB004_DHCD_FAV

Uploaded by: Chuck Cook

Position: FAV



WES MOORE
Governor
ARUNA MILLER
Lt. Governor
JACOB R. DAY
Secretary
JULIA GLANZ
Deputy Secretary

DATE: January 22, 2025
BILL NO.: Senate Bill 4
TITLE: Economic Development – West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

Letter of Support

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill 4 makes a number of changes to the powers, duties, and composition of the West North Avenue Development Authority, establishes the authority as an instrumentality of the state, and makes the authority permanent.

Background and Analysis:

The West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) was established by the General Assembly in 2021 for the purpose of developing revitalization strategies for the target area in Baltimore City. The Secretary of Housing and Community Development is a board member of WNADA. Originally, statutory provisions related to WNADA were set to terminate in September 2026. As originally established, WNADA had authority and powers similar to a stakeholder commission, but, in practice (and as originally intended, as articulated by the Office of the Attorney General in 2022), the entity has acted as an economic development authority, which distributes \$15 million annually in grants intended for projects that support development in the target area. The authority submitted its Comprehensive Plan, aimed at advancing community development by promoting strategies and opportunities that enhance housing, mobility, and economic opportunity in this area, in January of 2024.

Since its formation, WNADA has helped bring significant resources into the North Avenue corridor in West Baltimore, which has suffered from decades of disinvestment and decay. These resources fund efforts such as rehabilitating vacant homes and replacing abandoned lots with residential and commercial development, bringing residents and jobs into these neighborhoods and expanding the city's tax base while prioritizing the most vulnerable members of the community.

Senate Bill 4 expands and clarifies WNADA's powers and duties, and, importantly, exempts WNADA from certain taxation and assessments in some circumstances. It also establishes the West North Avenue Development Authority Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund. These provisions will help the authority become self-sufficient in future years, decreasing the need for state budget expenditure. Making the authority a permanent entity also ensures that it will be able to implement its Comprehensive Plan for these neighborhoods.

DHCD Position

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 4.



SB4_DeptofCommerce_FAV

Uploaded by: Jennifer Cox LaHatte

Position: FAV



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Kevin Anderson | Secretary of Commerce

DATE: January 22, 2025
BILL NO: Senate Bill 4
BILL TITLE: Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority – Alterations
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports Senate Bill 4 - Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

Bill Summary:

This legislation alters the administration and powers of the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA), on which Board the Secretary of Commerce or their designee serves. The bill also creates a special fund to carry out the purposes of WNADA, creates a Board of Directors for WNADA and generally establishes administrative requirements and processes for WNADA. Senate Bill 4 also removes the September 30, 2026 sunset date.

Background:

Chapters 80 and 81, Acts of 2021, established WNADA for the purpose of developing a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy for a specific target area in Baltimore City. WNADA must support the development and approval of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan in the target area and the buffer zone to benefit (1) the residents; (2) housing; (3) neighborhoods; (4) economic development; and (5) transportation, including motor vehicles and pedestrians. WNADA must also work in coordination with the residents of the target area and the buffer zone to develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan. WNADA presented its comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy in early 2024.

Rationale:

The Secretary of Commerce currently sits as a member of the West North Avenue Redevelopment Authority and upon passage of Senate Bill 4 will be a member of its Board of Directors. WNADA is a key driver of economic and community development in West North Avenue – a historically important east-west thoroughfare in Baltimore. Continued reinvestment in this area through WNADA is critical to improve the economic health and safety of this corridor in Baltimore, and Senate Bill 4 ensures WNADA has the capacity to do so.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 4.

SB4_BARCO_FAV

Uploaded by: Leon Pinkett, III

Position: FAV

January 22, 2025

Testimonial Letter to the Maryland Senate Finance Committee
Honorable Pamela G. Beidle, Chairperson

Thank you Chair Beidle and the Maryland Senate Finance Committee for your support of economic and neighborhood development throughout Maryland. I'm writing to support the House Bill-0258, which supports the continuous support provided by the West North Avenue Development Authority.

We are calling on our State to prioritize resources and support for West Baltimore and the efforts of Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO) to work in partnership with the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA).

My name is Leon F. Pinkett, III. I am the Executive Director/CEO of BARCO and have spent 28 years in West Baltimore, where I served publicly in the Mayor's Office and as a City Councilmember representing this district, and privately as a nonprofit real estate development professional. I would like to state for the record that the opinions expressed within this letter are my own.

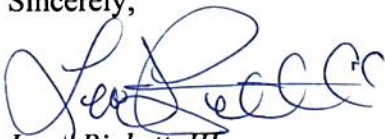
In my experience, I have seen West Baltimore neighborhoods as historically under-resourced, disinvested, and without a consistent economic development strategy from Baltimore City and the State of Maryland. Through the efforts of WNADA, I've been given hope that a more equitable development plan for the City of Baltimore is underway, and I am pleased that the State of Maryland is taking steps to address the years of economic and neighborhood development abandonment that our community has faced.

I urge the committee to support House Bill – 0258 and Senate Bill 4.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this written testimony and the chance to weigh in on policy and the wellbeing of West Baltimore. Your consideration of these matters and solutions is very much appreciated. I would welcome an opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,



Leon Pinkett, III
CEO + Executive Director
Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO)

SB4_MDOT_FAV

Uploaded by: Matthew Mickler

Position: FAV



Wes Moore
Governor
Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor
Paul J. Wiedefeld
Secretary

January 22, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
Hearing Room 3, East Senate Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support – SB 4 – Economic Development – West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following letter in support of Senate Bill 4.

Senate Bill 4 establishes the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) as a permanent authority and alters the composition, powers, and duties of the authority to more closely align to a State established economic development authority.

As a designee within the authority, we are supportive of the sponsor's intent to provide the West North Avenue Development Authority greater autonomy for the purposes of economic development. Of particular interest, the bill creates a forum for stakeholders to come together on creating a 20-year comprehensive plan around economic, housing, transportation, neighborhood, and green space development within the target zone. This multi-stakeholder approach encourages private and public partners to optimize residential land usage, expand access to jobs, and effectively manage traffic congestion.

Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee submit a favorable report for Senate Bill 4.

Respectfully submitted,

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

SB 4 CLC Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Amy Petkovsek

Position: FWA



SB 4 Economic Development- West North Avenue Development Authority- Alterations

Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee

January 22, 2025

Position: Unfavorable

The Community Law Center (CLC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a legal partner to Maryland neighborhoods and nonprofits in pursuit of more just and vibrant communities. CLC provides direct legal representation to communities and nonprofits on issues like tax exemption and organizational governance, real estate, contracts, intellectual property, employment law, and more. We advocate on issues that impact our Maryland neighborhood and nonprofit clients, including to reform the tax sale system and to prevent and remediate property vacancy and abandonment.

CLC supports economic growth that is community-led, uplifting neighborhoods so they have a meaningful voice in much needed redevelopment efforts. SB 4, as drafted, gives the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) a concerning overreach of quasi-governmental power without the necessary checks and balances or community protection. Thus, the potential for overreach and misuse is substantial. Most concerning, SB 4 provides no explicit protection for owner occupied residential properties from WNADA's eminent domain power. CLC proposes an amendment to SB 4 specifically prohibiting the WNADA Board from considering owning or operating a project that would require the use of eminent domain on an owner-occupied residential property.

SB 4 removes the need to adhere to provisions in Title 5A, Maryland's Division of Historical and Cultural Protections. Removing the requirement to follow historical protection provisions in a low-income historic district allows for development to fundamentally change the character of historic communities without the same protection and action that would be taken in higher income areas. While the need for economic growth is substantial, it cannot be accomplished at the detriment of the facades that carried neighborhoods across decades.

SB 4, in listing the mechanisms by which it can acquire property in Baltimore City, does not prioritize the list of powers. Thus, eminent domain can be used before, for instance, in rem foreclosure. CLC contends that prioritizing this list protects residential neighborhoods from

private development overreach. Moreover, removing the “sunset” provision for WNADA allows a broad reach of power to proceed without prescribed legislative limit. CLC recommends either leaving the 2026 sunset provision in place, or extending it without eliminating it entirely. Additionally, while there is community representation on WNADA’s Board, it only provides for 2 individuals, and the composition of communities involved in the criteria for those persons excludes neighborhoods specifically affected by current WNADA action.

CLC does not support SB4 as currently drafted, and would be glad to work on amendments that allow for development while still protecting neighborhoods. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For the above reasons, CLC urges a **UNFAVORABLE VOTE ON SB4.**

Please contact Amy Petkovsek, Executive Director at Community Law Center, with any questions.

AmyP@communitylaw.org | 410-366-0922

Updated Testimony

Uploaded by: Amy Petkovsek

Position: FWA



SB 4 Economic Development- West North Avenue Development Authority- Alterations

Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee

January 22, 2025

Position: Favorable with amendments

The Community Law Center (CLC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a legal partner to Maryland neighborhoods and nonprofits in pursuit of more just and vibrant communities. CLC provides direct legal representation to communities and nonprofits on issues like tax exemption and organizational governance, real estate, contracts, intellectual property, employment law, and more. We advocate on issues that impact our Maryland neighborhood and nonprofit clients, including to reform the tax sale system and to prevent and remediate property vacancy and abandonment.

CLC supports economic growth that is community-led, uplifting neighborhoods so they have a meaningful voice in much needed redevelopment efforts. SB 4, as drafted, gives the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA) a concerning overreach of quasi-governmental power without the necessary checks and balances or community protection. Thus, the potential for overreach and misuse is substantial. Most concerning, SB 4 provides no explicit protection for owner occupied residential properties from WNADA's eminent domain power. CLC proposes an amendment to SB 4 specifically prohibiting the WNADA Board from considering owning or operating a project that would require the use of eminent domain on an owner-occupied residential property.

SB 4 removes the need to adhere to provisions in Title 5A, Maryland's Division of Historical and Cultural Protections. Removing the requirement to follow historical protection provisions in a low-income historic district allows for development to fundamentally change the character of historic communities without the same protection and action that would be taken in higher income areas. While the need for economic growth is substantial, it cannot be accomplished at the detriment of the facades that carried neighborhoods across decades. CLC proposes an amendment that deletes the Title 5A exemption.

SB 4, in listing the mechanisms by which it can acquire property in Baltimore City, does not prioritize the list of powers. Thus, eminent domain can be used before, for instance, in rem foreclosure. CLC contends that prioritizing this list protects residential neighborhoods from

private development overreach. Moreover, removing the “sunset” provision for WNADA allows a broad reach of power to proceed without prescribed legislative limit. CLC recommends either leaving the 2026 sunset provision in place, or extending it without eliminating it entirely. Additionally, while there is community representation on WNADA’s Board, it only provides for 2 individuals, and the composition of communities involved in the criteria for those persons excludes neighborhoods specifically affected by current WNADA action.

CLC is supportive of economic development and growth in West Baltimore, and would be glad to work on amendments that allow for development while still protecting neighborhoods. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For the above reasons, CLC urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS VOTE ON SB4**.

Please contact Amy Petkovsek, Executive Director at Community Law Center, with any questions.

AmyP@communitylaw.org | 410-366-0922

SB0004 Testimony - Lars Peterson 20250120.pdf

Uploaded by: Lars Peterson

Position: UNF

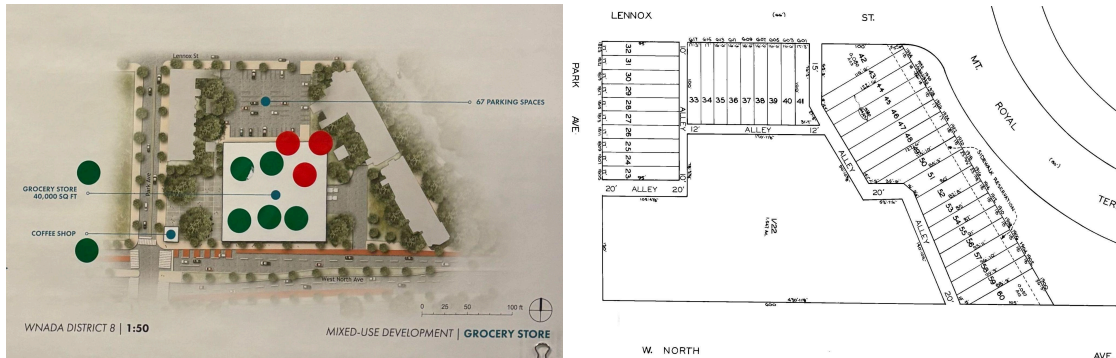
Lars Andrew Peterson
615 Lennox St
Baltimore, MD 21217

The Honorable Senator Antonio L. Hayes, Vice Chairperson, Finance Committee
RE: SB0004 Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

Dear Senator Hayes and members of the Finance Committee,

I am a resident and owner of 615 Lennox Street in Reservoir Hill, a home within the area of the West North Avenue Development Authority's (WNADA) project area. WNADA's original mandate was to engage with the community and produce a vision plan for future development along the West North Avenue corridor. SB0004 proposes to radically expand WNADA's power and scope, both economically and legally, to include the use of eminent domain and condemnation of private property, in order to effectively pursue its goals. It further exempts the authority from compliance with any historic preservation regulations.

What are its goals and plans? In October, WNADA presented a series of concepts to the public assembled at Unity Hall. One of these plans was the drawing reproduced here showing the 600 block of Lennox Street, which is my home:



Left: concept presented by WNADA in October 2024 Right: existing real property boundaries

This plan was presented without context to a public who were asked to “vote” for it in the affirmative, green dots indicating “*your favorite scheme / option*” and red dots indicating “*specific items within a scheme that you like.*” There was no option to “vote” against any of these concepts or to add clarification or questions. The results of this charette were recorded by WNADA quantitatively as a record of community engagement and support.

What this plan does not show is that **it is impossible without seizing and demolishing a row of nine owner-occupied homes built in the 1880's and protected by CHAP.**

I cannot support this bill granting WNADA the power to spend public money to use eminent domain and condemnation to seize real property, when the authority has demonstrated so reckless and cavalier an attitude towards mine and my neighbors' homes, and a disregard for our concerns. The responses we have received from WNADA thus far have not acknowledged that it has made any misstep. Our conversations with its representatives at the October event demonstrated that they were unaware that their proposed design erased occupied, beautiful homes, a fact that would have been revealed by even the most cursory investigation.

Sincerely,

Lars A. Peterson