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To: House Appropriations Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the House Appropriations Committee to give a favorable report to HB0226 -

Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment.

Accessible and affordable housing is the greatest challenge that people with disabilities have to face. There is a shortage and the waiting list is extremely long. This bill goes beyond lip service by offering a good solution. It establishes housing programs and it gives the department the authority to develop relationships with foundations that can support these programs with the necessary funding. This bill develops private-public partnerships and allows the department to get some funding from foundations rather than the State, so there should not be a high fiscal note.

The goal of this bill is to offer integrated housing of their choice to persons with disabilities. Please vote "Yes" on this important bill.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB0226. For questions, please contact me at [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org) or at 443-426-4110.