



Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore, Inc.

January 20, 2025

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Miller Senate Office Building
3 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 372

Honorable Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

I am the Chief Executive Officer of Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore (NHS), and a resident of Baltimore City. Our organization believes that economic and social justice are a right for all residents and communities. We promote this belief by removing barriers of access to homeownership, helping resident access resources to maintain their homes, and supporting communities historically impacted by systemic disinvestment.

SB 372 creates the Maryland New Markets Development Program which is modeled after the federal New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program. NHS has utilized the NMTC three times in the past five years. The program has provided necessary capital to support investments into low- and moderate-income communities that have suffered from historic disinvestment. There are two advantages presented by a state program. First, the state credits can be leveraged by federal credits to magnify impact and move projects forward. This allows for additional projects to move forward that would be restricted without these investments. Second, it is extremely difficult to navigate the federal program requiring significant costs to close loans. It typically costs well over \$500K to close one deal. The state program is designed to provide a tool that can be leveraged in smaller amounts opening opportunities that otherwise would not be able to access credits due to the barriers of access. This is especially impactful for low- and moderate-income communities.

SB372 provides access to tax credits for many quality projects. We ask that the Committee issue a **favorable** report on SB372

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. T. Ellis".

Daniel T. Ellis
Chief Executive Officer



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