



**DRUID HEIGHTS**  
Community Development Corporation

**Druid Heights Community Development Corporation**

2140 McCulloh Street Baltimore, Maryland 21217

**Testimony**  
**Bill Hearing – SB818**  
**Position-Support**

**March 4, 2026**

Honorable Chair and Budget and Taxation Committee:

I'm writing to support **SB818** sponsored by Senator Antonio Hayes. The purpose of this act is to assist with additional requirements related to the State Center project and to establish a State Center Advisory Group for the development of State Center..

Druid Heights Community Development Corporation (DHCDC) is a community-based, 501 (c)(3) non-profit community development corporation. DHCDC is located in zip code 21217 in Baltimore City, within Census Tract 1403 a designated Urban Renewal Area. Our mission is to cause, encourage and promote community self-empowerment, through the development of economic, educational, employment, and affordable housing opportunities. DHCDC is pleased that the State of Maryland is taking steps to address the years of economic and neighborhood development abandonment that our community has faced. This support includes funding support towards neighborhood investment for projects which include Bakers View Homeownership project, restoration of our Maggie Quille Center and green space projects such as our Gold Street project.

DHCDC is highly invested in the The State Center project and urge the committee to consider this requirement to assist with community support and provide engagement for a vital project that will involve economic stability for West Baltimore and the greater Baltimore community. In addition, the advisory group will review and oversee:

- 1) implementing an enforceable community benefits agreement between the developer and the State Center Neighborhood Alliance, Inc. to provide for a concerted and coordinated effort by the developer and the community throughout the entire planning, development, and construction phases of the project;
- 2) a comprehensive local hiring plan for the project that includes goals for short-term construction jobs, long-term employment opportunities, and job training; and

I urge the committee to support **SB818** State Center – Development – Contract, Plan Requirements, and Advisory 2 Group . 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.

Sincerely,

*Ms. JohnDre Jennings*

JohnDre Jennings, Executive Director