

March 2nd, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: MBIA Letter of Support HB 1137 Land Use - Multifamily Developments and Mixed-Use Developments - Authorization (Bring Back Main Street Act)

Dear Chair Valderrama,

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **HB 1137 Land Use - Multifamily Developments and Mixed-Use Developments - Authorization (Bring Back Main Street Act)**.

This bill requires counties over 150,000 residents and Baltimore City to allow multifamily and mixed-use developments as a permitted use on commercially or recreationally zoned properties that are served by water and sewer. It also establishes limits on local zoning and private land-use restrictions. MBIA is in full support of this bill, as it will create more opportunities to build more housing. According to a recent study by Comptroller Brooke Lierman, Maryland is short 150,000 homes, and high housing costs are pushing out longtime residents to neighboring states like Pennsylvania and Virginia. When there aren't enough homes to meet demand, tough competition dramatically drives up housing costs and causes our state to lose talented workers and valued neighbors.

HB 1137 addresses our housing crisis by allowing multifamily and mixed-use developments by right on appropriately located parcels that already have access to water and sewer infrastructure. This type of development encourages vibrant "Main Street" neighborhoods. Many counties currently ban main streets. This prevents builders from repurposing abandoned office parks or underutilized malls (such as Marley Station Mall in Anne Arundel County or Security Square Mall in Baltimore County) to create inviting, connected neighborhoods. 80% of Marylanders support allowing more homes to be built in commercial areas, like aging shopping centers or vacant office buildings, according to Greater Greater Washington. Removing zoning barriers that prevent redevelopment will replace outdated, crumbling buildings with vibrant neighborhoods where people can live, work, and shop.

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 Economic Matters Committee