

**FAVORABLE Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 274  
Fair Housing and Housing Discrimination – Regulations and Discriminatory  
Effect**

**Economic Matters  
April 2, 2026  
1:00 pm**

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Public Policy Partners, on behalf of MSEA**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 274. This legislation strengthens Maryland's fair housing framework by clarifying regulatory authority and ensuring that State law is applied consistently with established federal standards and relevant case law.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA's support for Senate Bill 274 is grounded in our long-standing policy commitments. MSEA Resolution F.23 (Fair Housing) affirms that fair housing practices should be strengthened to ensure every individual has an equal opportunity to live in a community of their choice. Senate Bill 274 advances this principle by reinforcing Maryland's fair housing laws within a clear and well-established legal framework.

The bill, as amended, appropriately aligns Maryland law with federal fair housing guidance and judicial precedent, including the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.* and applicable federal regulations. At the same time, it preserves existing Maryland case law, including *Hare v. David S. Brown Enterprises, Ltd.*, ensuring continuity and clarity in how fair housing claims are evaluated.



By clarifying the role of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in administering and enforcing fair housing laws, Senate Bill 274 supports consistent implementation and oversight. Clear regulatory authority is essential to ensuring that fair housing protections are meaningful and effectively carried out.

Importantly, the bill maintains appropriate guardrails by recognizing that lawful, nondiscriminatory policies adopted to achieve legitimate objectives remain permissible. This balanced approach supports compliance while maintaining strong protections against unlawful discrimination.

For MSEA members, fair housing is closely tied to workforce stability and student success. Educators and school staff are renters, homeowners, and community members whose housing circumstances affect their ability to remain in their professions and serve students effectively. Stable and equitable access to housing supports stronger communities and better outcomes for students.

Senate Bill 274 represents a thoughtful and measured step to ensure Maryland's fair housing laws are clear, consistent, and aligned with governing legal standards. We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 274.