

Testimony in Support of SB 325 – Maryland Housing Certainty Act
Economic Matters Committee
February 18, 2026

Good afternoon Chair and Members of the Committee.

My name is Clark Wagner. I serve as Vice President of Land Acquisition and Entitlement for Pleasants Development LLC. I am here today in strong support of Senate Bill 325, the Maryland Housing Certainty Act.

Our company recently experienced firsthand the type of uncertainty this bill is designed to prevent. We submitted a Sketch Plan for a residential project in the Town of Mount Airy. At the time of submission, we relied on the duly adopted zoning regulations in effect — including permitted density and required green space standards. We had already invested thousands of dollars in engineering, planning, architectural design, and traffic analysis, all based on those existing regulations.

After our application was submitted and after public input had already occurred, the Town amended the zoning text for our district. The changes reduced the allowable density and increased required green space — materially altering the feasibility of our project. The Town also changed the requirements for new municipal water supply wells, which we were in the process of providing for our project.

As a result, we were forced to redesign the project at significant additional cost and delay. That kind of mid-stream rule change creates financial risk that discourages housing production and makes it harder to bring new homes to market in Maryland.

SB 325 provides a reasonable and balanced solution. It simply ensures that once a substantially complete application is submitted, it is reviewed under the laws and regulations in effect at that time. It does not eliminate local control. It does not prevent future zoning changes. It simply provides certainty and fairness in the permitting process.

Developers, lenders, and communities all benefit from predictable rules. Housing production requires capital investment, and capital requires certainty.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 325.

Thank you for your time and consideration.