



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

### House Economic Matters Committee

### HB 573: Fair Housing and Housing Discrimination – Regulations, Intent, and Discriminatory Effect

February 19, 2026

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council's (Council) vision is that people with and without disabilities in Maryland live, learn, work, and play together. HB 573 is another step forward to make sure that happens.

#### WHAT does this legislation do?

- Authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to create regulations that actively promote fair housing.
- Prohibits actions that have a discriminatory effect, even if there is no deliberate intent.

#### WHY is this legislation important?

- **People with developmental disabilities face unique housing challenges.** These can include lack of accessible units, refusal of reasonable accommodations, or exclusionary rules that prevent supportive living arrangements. The bill strengthens the state's ability to respond to these issues and improve housing choice and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities.
- **Fair housing protections today often focus on intent, not impact.** Many people, including those with developmental disabilities, face barriers to housing not because someone intended to discriminate but because policies or patterns in zoning, planning, or housing design have unequal effects. This bill helps close that gap by addressing *disparate outcomes* that create real obstacles to fair housing.

HB 573 is a necessary update to Maryland's fair housing laws, and improves protections and access for people with developmental disabilities.

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, [RLondon@md-council.org](mailto:RLondon@md-council.org)