

March 3, 2026

Economic Matters Committee  
Room 230, Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401



**House Bill 1137 – Land Use - Multifamily Developments and Mixed-Use Developments - Authorization (Bring Back Main Street Act – SUPPORT**

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

Writing to you in support of HB1137, *Land Use - Multifamily Developments and Mixed-Use Developments - Authorization (Bring Back Main Street Act)*. ICSC is the member organization for the advancement of the Marketplaces Industry, made up of shopping centers, malls and main streets, and the commerce they drive and the communities they create. Our member network includes property owners, developers, financial institutions, professional service providers and, importantly, shopping center tenants such as retailers, restaurants, gyms, childcare providers, and health centers. In Maryland, 1900 marketplaces with over 525,000 jobs, make up nearly 14% of the State’s job force. For over 65 years, ICSC has promoted and elevated the marketplaces and spaces where people shop, dine, work, play and gather as foundational and vital ingredients to everyday life.

We believe that adaptive reuse is critical to revitalizing Maryland’s commercial corridors. HB 1137 requires counties with populations over 150,000 to allow multifamily and mixed-use development as a permitted use on commercially or recreationally zoned parcels already served by water and sewer. This is especially important for aging shopping centers and underutilized commercial properties that are well-located and infrastructure-ready but were built for a different retail era.

By allowing residential and mixed-use projects to proceed without discretionary zoning approvals, the bill provides the predictability necessary for adaptive reuse to move forward. These projects add much-needed housing while strengthening Main Streets and neighborhood centers by creating built-in customers for local retailers, restaurants, and service providers. The bill also removes cost-prohibitive barriers—such as excessive density limits, setbacks, and parking mandates—while preserving local authority over siting and design.

By directing growth to existing commercial areas with infrastructure in place, HB 1137 promotes smart growth, supports small businesses, strengthens local tax bases, and stabilizes properties that might otherwise face prolonged vacancy and decline.

Sincerely,  
Eric McWilliams  
ICSC Maryland Government Relations Chair

*If you have any questions regarding this document or ICSC please contact Michael Walsh  
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