

HON. STACY A. MAYER
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
BALTIMORE COUNTY
CHAIR

HON. RICHARD SANDY
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
FREDERICK COUNTY
VICE-CHAIR



KELLEY O'CONNOR
ASSISTANT STATE COURT
ADMINISTRATOR
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MARYLAND JUDICIAL COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 1529
Baltimore County - Local Commission on Common Ownership
Communities
DATE: March 4, 2026
(3/12)

INFORMATIONAL COMMENT PAPER WITH REQUESTED AMENDMENTS

The Judiciary respects the separation of powers doctrine and acknowledges the policy-making authority of the legislative branch. As such, the Judiciary has no position on the policy aims of this legislation.

The Judiciary only writes to note concerns with the particular provisions listed below on page 14.

The mandatory consolidation provision on page 14, lines 19–20 takes away necessary judicial discretion given the breadth of potential cases potentially included. The Judiciary would request that the consolidation be within the trial judge's discretion to appropriately consider the unique factors of the various cases and be changed from "shall be consolidated" to "may be consolidated."

In addition, on page 14, lines 17-18, "court of competent jurisdiction" is not defined. However, given that the bill is limited to Baltimore County, it appears that it should be specifically delineated to prevent confusion. As such, the Judiciary requests that that

language be amended to read “a party may appeal a decision of a hearing panel to the Circuit Court for Baltimore County” rather than “a court of competent jurisdiction” as that would be the only court that would have jurisdiction over that appeal.

cc. Hon. Kim Ross
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O’Connor