



Testimony HB 343
House Economic Matters Committee
February 4, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE/W Amendments

Chair Valderamman and Members of the Economic Matters Committee;

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on nonprofit housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based revitalization across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities.

HB 343 bill seeks to make available notice of availability of housing counseling services and provide funding for housing counseling in the state of Maryland. We have offered an amendment on page 2 to limit this bill to funding for Strategic Demolition the Baltimore Vacant Reinvestment Initiative for developers for Single Family Homeownership.

Housing Counselors serve homebuyers, homeowners and renters as they work to achieve their housing goal or meet their housing needs. CDN has a long history of partnering with the state of Maryland, the banking and mortgage industry, and philanthropic donors to deliver training and provide professional development for US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) certified housing counselors. Counselor certification requires an exam and affiliation with HUD approved not-for-profit organizations.

[Studies](#) show the effectiveness of housing counseling. For instance, "a nationwide Urban Institute [study](#) by Mayer, et al., (2010) of the foreclosure mitigation counseling program found that borrowers in foreclosure were 70 percent more likely to get up-to-date on payments if they received...counseling. The same study showed that homeowners who received a mortgage modification to resolve a serious delinquency were 45 percent more likely to sustain that modification if it was obtained with the help of counseling." Another study showed that "Most study participants had tried to contact their servicer when they first fell behind but had not been successful in negotiating with their lenders." Foreclosure prevention housing counseling benefits the lender, as well as, the homeowner.

I respectfully request a FAVORABLE report on HB 343.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network

Amendment No. 1 – on page 2 in lines 7-10:

(B) AS A CONDITION ON THE RECEIPT OF STRATEGIC DEMOLITION AND BALTIMORE VACANTS REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE FUNDING FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR ANY PROJECT TO CONSTRUCT, ACQUIRE, OR REHABILITATE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR USE AS SINGLE FAMILY HOMEOWNERSHIP, HOUSING, A FUNDING RECIPIENT SHALL AGREE TO OFFER HOUSING COUNSELING SERVICES TO PROSPECTIVE RESIDENTS PRIOR TO CONTRACT.