



Support the Bring Back Main Street Act (SB829)

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, & the Environment Committee:

We, the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#) (ACT, AIM, and PATH), a multi-racial, multi-faith, nonpartisan community power organization representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to make Maryland a better place to live and thrive.

In our [listening sessions last fall with over 3,000 Maryland residents](#), we asked them, “What is keeping you and your family from thriving?” The high cost of housing was one of the top concerns people raised.

We support this bill because we need to make the state of Maryland a place where quality, stable homes that people can afford are widely available. Right now, the cost of housing is rising out of reach for so many people because of our enormous housing shortage.

The Bring Back Main Street bill will create new housing opportunities by allowing mixed-use development (housing mixed in with stores and businesses) to be built in commercial areas, with a focus on underused strip malls and office buildings.

Having more housing options will enable more seniors, young adults, and families to afford to live independently, and help working people—our teachers, firefighters, police officers, hospital employees and more—afford to live where they work.

Mixed-use redevelopment also gives people the chance to live near the places they need to go—jobs, stores, et cetera—without having to drive long distances. Especially when located near transit, this redevelopment also helps our environment and reduces pollution.

Rev. Michael Vanacore, pastor of Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Wheaton, shares: “We need action, and we need it today, to make homes affordable and accessible in our communities. If we don’t, I am afraid I will not have a house, a church, or a community to come home to for much longer.”

We are counting on you to pass a clean version of this bill out of your committee. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

The Maryland Just Power Alliance