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**ROBERT G. CASSILLY**  
Harford County Executive



**ROBERT S. McCORD**  
Director of Administration

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February 12, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter in Opposition of SB 325 – “Land Use - Permitting - Development Rights (Maryland Housing Certainty Act)”

Dear Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of Harford County to respectfully oppose Senate Bill 325, the Maryland Housing Certainty Act.

Harford County supports efforts to reduce unnecessary barriers to housing development and increase certainty in the permitting process. However, SB 325 would significantly restrict local land use and development authority by locking in regulatory standards at the time a housing application is deemed substantially complete, regardless of evolving local planning goals, updated ordinances, or changes in infrastructure capacity.

Local governments are charged with balancing housing supply with infrastructure readiness, environmental protection, public safety, and community character. Comprehensive plans and development regulations are updated through deliberate, public processes to reflect the needs and priorities of residents and stakeholders. SB 325’s approach would prevent county and municipal governments from applying updated regulations to pending projects, even when those updates address critical issues such as traffic capacity, stormwater management, environmental protection, or community compatibility.

Further, the bill’s vesting provisions could undermine local planning objectives and long-range coordination. Allowing projects to proceed indefinitely under outdated standards weakens the ability of counties to manage growth responsibly, adapt to changing conditions, and ensure that development investments align with current infrastructure and service capacity.

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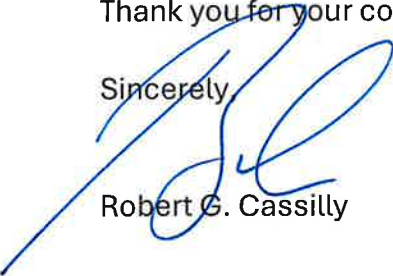
The bill is also designated as imposing a mandate on local governments, yet does not provide corresponding resources to support the administrative, legal, or operational impacts associated with administering vesting protections for significant numbers of projects over extended periods. This shift of responsibility without adequate support creates unfunded costs for counties at a time when local governments are already managing constrained budgets and competing priorities.

Counties are committed to improving predictability in permitting and to reducing unnecessary delays in housing development. We have pursued local reforms, streamlined review processes, and enhanced coordination with stakeholders to achieve these goals while preserving local planning authority and accountability.

For these reasons, Harford County respectfully urges the Committee to oppose SB 325 in its current form. We encourage the development of housing policy that supports both certainty for applicants and the ability of local governments to adapt regulations in response to evolving community needs and priorities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert G. Cassilly