



## **Senate Bill 325 - Land Use - Permitting - Development Rights (Maryland Housing Certainty Act)**

### **Position: Support**

Maryland REALTORS® supports SB 325 for addressing two key drivers of Maryland's housing shortage: regulatory uncertainty and excessive upfront development costs. At a time when housing affordability continues to worsen, Maryland must remove barriers that delay or discourage housing construction.

Local regulatory changes, prolonged approval timelines, and front-loaded impact fees increase the cost of building homes and reduce overall housing supply. Those added costs are ultimately passed on to Maryland homebuyers and renters. SB 325 takes practical steps to restore predictability and reduce risk in the housing development process.

The bill's early vesting provision is especially important. The right to use and develop property is among the most valuable rights associated with land ownership. Developers must make significant investments early in the process for engineering, site design, and permitting. When zoning or regulatory standards can change after an application is submitted, projects are often delayed, scaled back, or abandoned entirely. By locking in applicable regulations at the time of application, SB 325 strikes a fair balance: it preserves local authority to update zoning prospectively, while preventing bad-faith or reactionary changes that undermine pending projects.

SB 325 also improves affordability by deferring development impact fees until after construction is complete. While impact fees serve an important purpose, collecting them before construction increases financing costs and creates barriers to housing production. Deferral improves project feasibility and helps lower the final cost of homes.

For REALTORS®, housing affordability starts with housing supply. SB 325 provides certainty, encourages responsible development, and helps deliver more attainable housing options for Marylanders. We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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