

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to **oppose** the proposed Maryland legislation (**House Bill 239/Senate Bill 36**) that would allow the subdivision of single-family residential lots into up to three residential units, permit townhouses on these lots, reduce required setbacks to ten feet in the front and rear and five feet on the sides, and lower minimum lot sizes to 5,000 square feet.

While I understand the goal of increasing housing availability, this legislation takes a sweeping approach that risks creating overcrowding and placing significant burdens on already strained public resources in communities across Maryland, particularly in my county—Howard County.

Allowing multiple residential units and townhouses on lots originally designed for single-family homes would dramatically increase population density without corresponding investments in infrastructure. Many neighborhoods in Howard County are already experiencing crowded roads, limited parking, and aging stormwater and utility systems. This proposal would intensify those pressures and diminish overall neighborhood safety and livability.

Of particular concern is the impact on public schools and healthcare facilities. Many schools in Howard County are already operating at or near capacity, with crowded classrooms, limited staffing, and strained resources. Increasing residential density at this scale will inevitably add more students without a clear plan or funding to expand schools, hire educators, or improve facilities. Health care will also suffer a crushing blow. The Howard County General Hospital, in particular its Emergency Department, has long passed its tipping point with dangerously long wait times. Additional population density will further stretch the services the hospital provides, potentially affecting response times and quality of care.

The proposed reductions in setbacks and minimum lot sizes also raise serious quality-of-life and environmental concerns. Ten-foot front and rear setbacks and five-foot side setbacks significantly reduce green space, limit stormwater absorption, and increase impervious surface coverage. These changes increase the risk of flooding, reduce privacy, and erode the character of residential neighborhoods.

Housing affordability is a serious and complex issue, but it requires targeted solutions that balance growth with infrastructure capacity and community well-being. This legislation risks overcrowding neighborhoods and overwhelming essential services without ensuring that the new housing created will be affordable or sustainable.

For these reasons, I urge you to **oppose this legislation**.

Thank you for your time, I appreciate your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Kathy Broughton, Howard County Resident