



February 11, 2026

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

**RE: SB36 – Starter and Silver Homes Act of 2026**  
**Position: Unfavorable**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA), I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 36, the Starter and Silver Homes Act of 2026.

GOCA represents over 30 homeowners and civic associations, serving more than 50,000 residents in Montgomery County. During our February 2026 meeting, we unanimously voted to oppose SB0036. Additionally, over 500 residents have signed a petition against this legislation.

SB0036 would generally override local zoning powers throughout Maryland, removing significant community input and replacing it with a statewide requirement for locally customized planning decisions. Eliminating local control over single-family zoning ignores established master planning procedures and decisions made by local elected officials.

The bill would strain aging infrastructure in established neighborhoods, including roads, water, and sewer systems already under pressure. Increased density without coordinated upgrades will worsen deterioration and raise costs. It also heightens concerns about stormwater runoff, tree loss, heat island effects, and traffic emissions, especially where transit access is limited.

Notably, SB0036 lacks any affordability requirements. Without mandates or subsidies, the bill probably won't deliver significant housing relief and might instead promote redevelopment that displaces moderate-income homeowners.

For these reasons, GOCA believes SB0036 is fundamentally flawed and should not advance at this time. We respectfully urge the Committee to issue an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 36.

Respectfully submitted,

Curtis H. Chappell  
President  
Greater Olney Civic Association