

February 27, 2026

Testimony on: SB781 – CHERISH Our Communities Act

Submitting: Sandra Martinez

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 3, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sandra Martinez. I am a mother of four, and one of my children lives with respiratory issues and asthma. For the past two years, my family and I have lived in Baltimore City's District 46, where we have experienced firsthand the harmful effects of pollution in our community.

Every day, industrial activity and heavy transportation bring dust and pollution into our neighborhoods. We are forced to breathe air that negatively impacts our health and see pollution settle on our homes, cars, and streets. My daughter, who has special needs and asthma, struggles even more because of poor air quality. No parent should have to watch their child suffer simply because of where they live.

Communities like mine have been overlooked for too long when it comes to environmental protections. Families in frontline neighborhoods continue to carry a heavier burden of pollution and health impacts, yet our voices are often not included in decisions that affect our lives. The CHERISH Our Communities Act is an important step toward ensuring that cumulative pollution impacts are considered and that communities like mine receive the protection and attention we deserve.

I respectfully urge you to vote in favor of SB781 so that families like mine can live in healthier neighborhoods where our children can breathe clean air and thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sandra Martinez