

Tinsley Sumrell

Resident, West Laurel, Maryland

First-time Homeowner

To: House Economic Matters Committee

Re: HB239 – Land Use – Zoning – Limitations (Starter and Silver Homes Act of 2026)

Position: Opposed

My name is **Tinsley Sumrell**, and I am a resident of **West Laurel, Maryland**. I am a first-time homeowner who has worked my entire life to be able to own a single-family residence with my husband. We deeply value the residential, tree-filled neighborhood we have loved living in for the last year and a half. The **West Laurel** represents approximately **1,800 residences**, primarily in Prince George’s County with some in Montgomery County, and I wish to testify **against HB239**.

Implementation of HB239 would devastate the character of our community, which includes ¼-acre lots, ½-acre lots, and considerably larger lots. By increasing permitted density to **8 units per acre**, the number of residences in West Laurel could increase by roughly **fourfold**. Even partial movement toward that density would create significant strain on local schools, the road system, and other public services.

It could transform our tree-filled rural residential neighborhood into a dense hodgepodge of residences, including townhouses, and would likely result in widespread tree removal to make room for additional housing. This would make the area far less attractive and more vulnerable to heat impacts associated with global warming.

Parking is already strained in many parts of our community—as in many older residential areas across the state—and the additional vehicles associated with newly permitted density would create an unworkable situation. Additionally, the bill would very likely harm the county’s tax base, creating a burden on current taxpayers.

HB239 appears to offer no benefit to the quality of life of current residents, aside from potential financial gain for developers.

Please vote against HB239.

Sincerely,

Tinsley Sumrell