



Chair Brian Feldman  
and Members, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

February 24, 2026

**Senate Bill 829 – Bring Back Main Street – Favorable**


Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Maryland Policy Director for Greater Greater Washington, a nonprofit that supports better housing, land use, and transportation policies throughout Greater Washington and beyond. **We're proud to support Senate Bill 829, the Bring Back Main Street Act, and thank Senator Waldstreicher for his leadership on this important issue.**

You've heard it so many times this session: we are in a housing crisis. Due to 20 years of underbuilding, home prices continue to rise, middle-class families are leaving the state, and both local and state governments are facing budget shortfalls. [Our poll](#), released earlier this month, found that housing costs, inflation, and taxes are Marylanders' top three concerns.

At the same time, [we have a glut of underused and vacant commercial space](#): aging shopping centers and office buildings that have reached the end of their useful life and don't meet the needs of modern businesses. This bill aims to solve both problems at once, by allowing homes to be built on commercially zoned land, something that 80% of Marylanders support—across county lines and party lines.

Many communities in Maryland currently allow housing in commercial zones (aka mixed-use zoning), while others place significant restrictions on it or limit it to certain areas. This bill would establish common development standards for housing on commercial land, which creates predictability for property owners, while giving local governments some flexibility for how to craft zoning rules that fit their needs. It will bring new life to commercial corridors while giving more Marylanders the chance to live close

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to the things that matter: daily needs, jobs, transportation, friends and loved ones, health care, faith communities, and so on.

This type of legislation has been embraced by states across the nation, most recently Virginia, where their “Housing Near Jobs” bill [has just passed the House and Senate](#). I hope we can do the same this year, and we ask for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Reed', written in a cursive style.

Dan Reed  
Maryland Policy Director