



Testimony HB 147
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
January 27, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Wells and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on nonprofit housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based revitalization across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities.

HB 147 bill seeks to make the Nonprofit Organizations Navigator position within the Department of Commerce a permanent fixture by repealing the upcoming "sunset" or termination provision. Ensuring this role remains permanent is vital for the stability and growth of Maryland's communities.

The sector is a critical part of the Maryland economy employing over 12% of the state's workforce. Unlike for-profit businesses, nonprofits face a unique web of regulatory, tax, and compliance requirements. The Navigator serves as the bridge between these organizations and the resources they need to thrive.

- The Navigator provides a single point of contact for troubleshooting and guidance.
- By helping nonprofits secure grants and maintain compliance, the Navigator ensures that millions of dollars in services continue to flow into Maryland communities.
- A permanent Navigator reduces the administrative burden on other state employees by streamlining inquiries from the nonprofit community.

The "sunset" provision was originally intended to test the efficacy of the role. The results are clear: the Navigator is no longer an experiment—it is a necessity. Making this position permanent allows for long-term strategic planning and relationship building between the Department of Commerce and the nonprofit community.

The Nonprofit Organizations Navigator has proven to be an invaluable asset in helping Maryland's "impact economy" navigate the complexities of state government. To allow this position to terminate would be a step backward for Maryland's business climate and the communities these nonprofits serve.

I respectfully request a FAVORABLE report on HB 147.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network