



## **House Bill 99 - Municipalities - Annexed Land - Land Use and Density**

### **Position: Support**

Maryland REALTORS® support HB 99 as a practical step to advance housing supply, smart growth, and local economic development.

REALTORS® see firsthand how unnecessary regulatory uncertainty can stall housing projects, limit investment, and worsen affordability. HB 99 helps address these challenges by aligning zoning authority more closely with adopted land-use plans rather than outdated zoning classifications.

Under current law, municipalities must obtain express county approval to rezone recently annexed land for up to five years if the proposed use or density differs from county zoning—even when those properties are clearly designated for future development in a comprehensive plan. This restriction has resulted in real-world examples of housing projects failing in areas intentionally planned for growth, undermining both housing production and local economic vitality.

HB 99 offers a targeted solution by allowing zoning decisions for annexed land to be evaluated against the comprehensive plan of either the county or the municipality. Comprehensive plans reflect long-term planning, infrastructure capacity, housing needs, and economic goals, providing a more accurate and thoughtful framework for development decisions. This approach increases predictability for housing providers, encourages public-private partnerships, and reduces delays that can make projects financially infeasible.

At a time when Maryland faces a significant housing shortage, municipalities need the ability to implement the growth strategies already endorsed through their planning processes. HB 99 preserves collaboration between counties and municipalities while providing local governments with the flexibility needed to support housing development, community revitalization, and economic growth. For these reasons, REALTORS® respectfully urge a favorable report.

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