

HB1188_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
03/05/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/1188- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Excess Ownership of Single-Family Residences Excise Tax (End Hedge Fund Control of Maryland Homes Act of 2026)

TO: Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/1188, **Excess Ownership of Single-Family Residences Excise Tax (End Hedge Fund Control of Maryland Homes Act of 2026)**

The Maryland Association of Counties has declared a *Deep Dive: Solutions to Address Maryland's Housing Crisis*¹

Maryland has seen a growing trend of private corporations purchasing single-family homes to convert into long-term rentals or short-term vacation units. These practices reduce the supply of homes available to residents, limit long term wealth creation by Maryland Families, and contribute to rising housing costs.

In many communities, land within designated growth areas remains undeveloped or underutilized as owners hold properties for speculative purposes. This practice constrains the supply of buildable land, drives up housing costs, and undermines local planning goals. At the same time, counties and municipalities face growing demands for affordable housing and school infrastructure without sufficient revenue tools to meet those needs.

Many residential properties are being used as investment holdings, second homes, or short-term rentals rather than serving as primary residences. This trend reduces the supply of housing available to full-time residents, drives up prices, and creates barriers to homeownership. Meanwhile, local governments face growing demands for affordable housing and school infrastructure without sufficient revenue tools to meet these needs.

This bill is submitted to provide solutions to the noted problems by imposing an excise tax on the acquisition and excess ownership of certain single-family residences in the State by certain entities; providing for the calculation, collection, and distribution of the excise tax; establishing the Down Payment and Settlement Expense Loan Program Fund, which may be used only to provide financing for down payment and settlement expenses to enable eligible homebuyers to purchase homes; etc.

Those whose commerce, while lawful, create injury to residents of Maryland must bear the burden of providing ways to remediate that harm being caused.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/1188.

¹ <https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2025/11/13/deep-dive-solutions-to-address-marylands-housing-crisis/>