

Owen Patrick McEvoy
T: 443.392.9447 C: 443.910.5193
owen.mcevoy@nelsonmullins.com

100 S Charles St, Suite 1600
Baltimore, MD 21201
T: 443.392.9400 F: 443.392.9499
nelsonmullins.com

Testimony on HB 1080

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark,

For the record, I am Owen McEvoy, Counsel at Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough, LLP submitting testimony on behalf of our client, Arctaris Impact Investors. We strongly oppose HB1080 which would effectively eliminate the Opportunity Zone program in Maryland, shutting the door to billions in investment to areas of our state that are the most economically challenged.

Just last year, Arctaris announced a \$30 million opportunity zone investment in Baltimore City to convert a shuttered hotel into 303 units of desperately needed housing.

Arctaris believes the investment will also contribute to the City's efforts to reinvigorate downtown Baltimore which is still recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The development is led by GoodHomes, a New York City-based firm that specializes in distressed hotels to workforce housing conversion projects.

The newly created units are designed to be naturally affordable for households earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This approach is meant to meet the needs of local families and individuals seeking accessible housing options in a rapidly evolving urban landscape.

The opportunity zone designation help entice that investment.

HB1080 would prevent the governor from designating any new opportunity zones as mandated by federal law, threatening a program that is helping to spur investment into historically disinvested areas across Maryland.

As we continue to address the housing crisis, we can not dismantle a program that is helping build housing.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask the committee to give HB1080 an unfavorable report.