



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner

Date: February 20th, 2024

Re: Council Bill 24-0485 Tenant Opportunity to Purchase – Corrective Bill

Introduction

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 24-0485 for the purpose of clarifying a definition under Article 13, Subtitle 6 “Opportunity to Purchase”; and providing for a special effective date.

If approved by the City Council, this ordinance would delete the definition of “dwelling unit” and replace it with “single-family dwelling unit” and add the words “single-family dwelling unit” throughout the Bill, for the purpose of clarification. If enacted, this ordinance would take effect on the same date that Ordinance 23-275 *The Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke Opportunity to Purchase Act*, takes effect.

DHCD Analysis

The original Ordinance was intended to apply to all single-family dwelling units. The BFRC defines single-family dwelling units to mean a building that contains only 1 dwelling unit and is used only for that purpose. This amendment would clarify that a dwelling unit does not apply to a unit in a Multiple-family dwelling, thereby eliminating any confusion or ambiguities.

The Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke Opportunity to Purchase Act, as amended, may offer a pathway for additional housing stability for Baltimore’s renters, by allowing the renter currently residing in the property the right to buy it on market terms. The enhanced rights of first refusal for tenants may encourage increased homeownership throughout Baltimore.

Conclusion

DHCD respectfully requests a **favorable** report on City Council Bill 24-0485.

AK/sm

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor’s Office of Government Relations

Brandon M. Scott, Mayor • Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner

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