

CITIZENS^{OF}PIGTOWN

HISTORIC PIGTOWN'S COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

23 January 2023

Sharon Green-Middleton, Chair
Baltimore City Council
100 Holliday Street, Room 532
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: Testimony in Favor of Council Bill 22-0135R

Chair Green-Middleton:

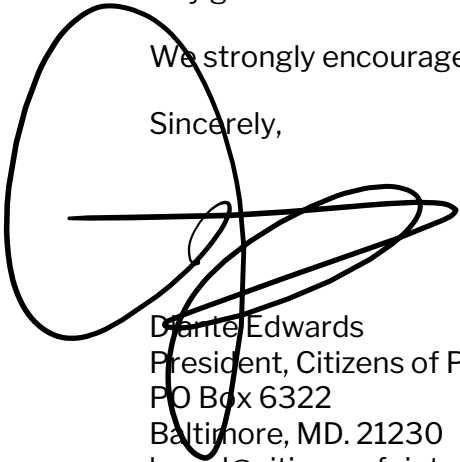
I am writing to you on behalf of Citizens of Pigtown (COP) Community Association to express our support for Council Bill 22-0135R. It is of the utmost importance to encourage owners of vacant commercial properties to invest in their properties. While Pigtown possesses a thriving Main Street corridor along Washington Blvd, extant vacants in this vital commercial area hinder overall economic development throughout the neighborhood.

Giving commercial vacant owners the incentive to create spaces will further uplift Pigtown, continuing the grassroots momentum built in recent years around attracting locally owned, community-minded businesses and increasing homeownership. Residents desire a “live, work, play” neighborhood, however current vacant commercial properties in Pigtown create an appearance of blight, driving away and creating barriers to potential new businesses and customers from outside the neighborhood.

Specifically, the former bank building at 770 Washington Blvd could serve as a major anchor institution in Pigtown. However, the current owner has refused above-market-rate offers from potential buyers/lessees, instead allowing the property to decay. This is but one example of a common style of property ownership that is detrimental to neighborhoods throughout Baltimore City, which requires increased oversight and accountability from our City government.

We strongly encourage you to pass Council Bill 22-0135R.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dante Edwards', is written over the typed name and address below.

Dante Edwards
President, Citizens of Pigtown
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Baltimore, MD. 21230
board@citizensofpigtown.com