

The Honorable Nick J. Mosby and Councilmembers of the Baltimore City Council
Baltimore City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: CITY OF BALTIMORE COUNCIL BILL 22-0195 – Inclusionary Housing for Baltimore City
Committee of the Whole Hearing, November 15, 2022

Position: Support with Sponsor Amendments

Dear Members of the Baltimore City Council,

My name is Sharonda Huffman, and I am the Director of Housing for Maryland Inclusive Housing Corporation (MIH). MIH was established to help people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (IDD) successfully access and maintain inclusive, affordable, and accessible housing of their choice. To this end, MIH set up Housing Committees around the state, including one in Baltimore City to address these issues.

Moreover, the MIH approved legislative priorities for local governments:

- Encourage local governments to set aside rental units for people with disabilities when government funding is used.
- Prioritize local funding for projects that include partnerships with or support by MIH and other disability organizations.
- Create incentives for more Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) accessible units than required by HUD.
- Encourage local governments to enact legislation requiring affordable housing to be included in all new construction and substantial rehabilitation rental and homeownership developments (Inclusionary Zoning) and incorporate incentives for units affordable to people with disabilities in these projects. Collaborate with the Maryland Department of Disabilities on advocacy for this priority.
- For affordable units financed or created under local inclusionary zoning programs, local governments should require and/or encourage Universal Design features in rental units and incentivize such features in homeownership units. Collaborate with people with physical disabilities, advocates, and experts to define the universal design features to be required and/or incentivized.

MIH urges the City Council to support the City of Baltimore Council Bill 22-0195. With amendments proposed by Councilwoman Ramos, we believe it is a start to inclusion and accessibility. To that end, we also support the re-establishment of an Inclusionary Housing Board to make determinations on fee-in-lieu requests if needed and maintain strong oversight and accountability. However, it is preferred that developers do not opt out of the law, by paying into a fund. We support collaboration with the Baltimore Housing Authority to explore project-based vouchers, including those for Non-Elderly Disabled recipients.

If a developer is receiving a major public subsidy or significant zoning change, they should make at least 10% of those units affordable to households earning no more than 60% of Area Median Income (AMI), plus an added 5% of units affordable at even lower incomes if the city offers the developer additional subsidy to do so. Further, we support sponsoring amendments that will ensure developers affirmatively market to groups including those of new development.

Personally, I am a mother of an adult with IDD and have worked in both the Office of Equity and Civil Rights and the Department of Housing and Community Development and would welcome future collaborations with this Council on being more inclusive to persons with disabilities. Inclusionary Housing provides ALL Baltimore residents the opportunity to take part in Baltimore's redevelopment as the integrated, equitable City we deserve.

Sincerely,



Sharonda L. Huffman
Housing Director
Maryland Inclusive Housing