

22-0195 Inclusionary Housing for Baltimore City

My name is Nancy Newman and I have been a resident of the Butchers Hill neighborhood since 1986. I am a retired social worker and am a member of the Inclusionary Housing Coalition as well as BRIDGE Maryland, Inc.

I am writing in support of the proposed bill as there is a desperate need for affordable housing in our city as well as more integrated neighborhoods which inclusionary housing can help increase.

This is a personal issue for me. I was forced to move from my first apartment back in 1979 because my rent was raised by \$15 a month (\$61.57 in 2022 dollars) and I didn't have it. I was working full time for Head Start as a home visiting teacher, but my income was too low to cover the increase in rent. I also was paying off my college student loans and a car loan for the car that was needed to be a home visiting teacher. I was able to move in with a friend who had recently divorced and couldn't afford her apartment on her Head Start salary, either.

I later moved to Baltimore and with my husband was able to become a home owner in Butchers Hill through Neighborhood Housing Services. Our income as a social worker and Methodist clergy qualified us for the home purchase. Ten years later, we moved to a larger house in the same neighborhood with our two sons. I remain in the house today.

For almost fifteen years before I retired, I was the Director of The Ark Preschool which was an emergency program for children whose families were experiencing homelessness. Many of the parents I worked with were employed, but like me, their income was too low to cover their rent and other expenses and they became homeless. The housing instability had an impact on their children's development. Many of the children were behind developmentally, although they had great potential. What they needed was housing stability and access to high quality education settings. Both of these can and should be available for all of our city's children. This is possible when affordable and inclusionary housing is made available. Affordable means reaching those at or below 60% AMI. Affordable units must actually be built and just not promised. In order to be inclusionary, fee-in-lieu should not be allowed as this just maintains housing segregation by income.

I want my tax dollars to support inclusionary affordable housing development rather than subsidizing more "luxury" apartments.