

January 23, 2023

Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton  
Chair, City Council Economic and Development Committee  
City Hall, 100 North Holiday Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201



Dear Councilwoman Middleton and members of the committee,

Please find this letter in support of Code Enforcement for Non-Residential Property - Council Bill 22-0135R.

As the Executive Director of Paul's Place and Groundwork Kitchen in Pigtown and as a resident of Baltimore city, I have a somewhat unique perspective on the negative impact of empty storefronts and vacant, neglected commercial properties in our city. It is beyond time to take action to hold commercial property owners accountable to register and show that they are working to lease or sell those properties. Their current neglect is having a significant negative impact on residential health and economic development in our city.

Paul's Place has been providing health and social services for 40 years in the Pigtown neighborhood and our guests are those Baltimore citizens most directly impacted by economic disinvestment that the actions of these commercial property owners represent.

We have made a significant investment in the city by opening Groundwork Kitchen in a brand new building on Washington Boulevard. It is arguably one of the most beautiful new restaurants in Baltimore. We will be creating 25 to 30 new jobs with our restaurant, catering and carryout operations and we run a training program that is graduating nearly 60 trained culinarians every year. We are placing those graduates into employment in the food service industry and helping them build sustainable careers.

The success of Groundwork Kitchen is dependent upon a thriving neighborhood with positive economic growth. Commercial property owners who let their properties deteriorate prevent that economic development from happening, which has a direct impact on our success. We've made a significant investment in the city, in a neighborhood that needs investment, and we want to see the regulatory environment support that investment.

Please support Code Enforcement for Non-Residential Property - Council Bill 22-0135R. Thank you very much for your attention to this important situation in our city.

Sincerely,

Tim Regan  
Executive Director  
Paul's Place & Groundwork Kitchen

[paulsplaceoutreach.org](http://paulsplaceoutreach.org)

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**MISSION**  
Paul's Place is a catalyst and leader for change, improving the quality of life in the Southwest Baltimore communities. Paul's Place provides programs, services, and support that strengthen individuals and families, fostering hope, personal dignity and growth.