



100 North Charles Street, 2nd Floor
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February 27, 2023

Senator Craig Zucker, Chair
Senator Cory McCray, Vice Chair
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for the Department of Housing and Community Development Capital Budget
Hearing before the Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee on February 28, 2023

Position: Support (FAV) with amendments

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP). I am writing to express our support for the Department of Housing and Community Capital Budget and call on the subcommittee to take swift and bold action to achieve robust and equitable investments to address Maryland's affordable housing shortage and homelessness crisis.

The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP) is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for families with low incomes, who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods, helping them to access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP has opened pathways to a better future for low-income families for nearly 10 years. BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of the Housing Choice Voucher and couples that with counseling supports for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties.

BRHP is dedicated to helping achieve racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures low-income Black and Brown families have access to quality and affordable homes in communities of their choice. We strongly encourage the Senate to maintain historic investments in affordable housing production, rental assistance, and homeownership programs. It is critical that robust housing investments are included in the capital budget, especially these top priorities:

- \$150 million for rental housing programs to increase affordable housing production and create pathways to expanded housing choice.
- \$12 million for the Partnership Rental Housing Program to create and preserve affordable housing across Maryland.
- \$175 million for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to assist an estimated 20,000 Maryland families in avoiding eviction.

The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership is an equal housing opportunity provider.





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- **\$21 million for homeownership programs to help families mitigate significant barriers to sustainable homeownership, a major vehicle for building wealth and economic opportunity.**

As this legislation advances and leaders continue to negotiate the size and scope of the capital budget, it is critical that any cuts made to the overall package do not come at the expense of affordable, accessible, and healthy homes for Marylanders. We urge you to ensure that funding levels for rental assistance, assisted housing, and community development in communities that have historically been neglected, remain at amounts not less than those approved in the previous year.

Now, more than ever, we need your leadership to take full advantage of this opportunity to invest in critical and proven housing solutions to address the underlying systemic causes of the housing and homelessness crisis in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield
Executive Director
Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership

