



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB0713 - Opportunity Zone Enhancement Program –
Eligibility – Lead-Based Paint
Affected Properties
Before the Finance Committee
on February 11, 2020**

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

We all want to revitalize our older and distressed neighborhoods. We all want to make them safe and attractive places to live, work, and play once more. The Opportunity Zone program is proving to be an effective way to do this. It is an incentive program administered by the US Treasury that gives capital gains tax breaks for investment in distressed neighborhoods. Areas designated as Opportunity Zones are now better able to attract new capital investment to help redevelop underserved communities.

The program is working, but we can make it better. The late Congressman Elijah Cummings had an idea about how to do this. He drafted and introduced United States House of Representatives HR 4011 to do just that. This bill requires that residential properties in Opportunity Zones meet established standards for lead-based paint remediation.

By this point, there should be no need to recount the harm that environmental lead does. Lead exposure can cause anemia and

damage to kidneys. Lead poisoning has been linked to learning disabilities, increased incidence of attention deficit disorder, and significantly greater rates of incarceration, among other things. This damage is entirely preventable.

Sadly, Congressman Cummings' voice no longer echoes in the House of Representatives. He cannot make this dream a reality. His bill has been languishing in the House Way and Means Committee since its introduction last summer. We can bring it forward here in Annapolis and make it the law of Maryland to honor his memory and help protect the citizens of Maryland.

As such, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on SB0713. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jill P. Carter