

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building,
2 West Wing 11 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: SB 636 Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization - Passive House Pilot Program

Dear Chairman Pinsky:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, supports Senate Bill 636 (Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization - Passive House Pilot Program).

This measure would establish a Passive House Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) designed to provide Baltimore City high school students with career and technical educational experiences by renovating residential properties to become passive houses.

This is a creative approach to encouraging energy efficient construction, preparing high school students to enter the job market, and strengthening the workforce. This is particularly helpful for the construction and development industry, which is facing a labor shortage. Many workers left the industry during the recession and never returned. With a limited market, the cost of labor increases, which must be built into the price of the home, increasing housing costs.

Compounding this problem, many high schools have phased out shop classes, so students who are interested in pursuing construction-related vocations have very limited opportunities to learn or connect with employers in those fields. This program could help Baltimore City adapt to a changing climate while encouraging students to explore construction and development training while in school

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee