



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Vice Chair
Appropriations Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)
DATE: 2/27/2022
RE: HB0039 Report on the Public or Private Conversion of State Property to Affordable Housing

The MLLC supports HB0039 Report on the Public or Private Conversion of State Property to Affordable Housing

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0039.

The Latino population in Maryland has increased from 8% to 10.6% in the last decade. According to the Latino Economic Development Center many Latino residents face significant challenges when attempting to rent and buy homes. Home prices have increased by about 8.8% since last December, while the number of homes sold fell by about 3%. In recent years, the cost of home ownership has continued to rise, while home buying has steadily declined. This is historically true among impoverished communities, including Latino residents.

Low wages, combined with a lack of affordable housing available, make homeownership out of reach for many individuals and families. Overall, Maryland Latino home ownership percentage in Maryland is barely higher than that of the United States, and is still extremely low, at 52.5% and 48.1% respectively.

This bill will require the Department of Planning and the Department of General Services, in partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development, to report to the Board of Public Works and the General Assembly on strategies for the public or private development and use of surplus real property and excess real property retained for possible future use by the State as affordable housing on or before June 30, 2023. This bill seeks to convert unused state-owned land into places where new affordable housing units can be built, allowing residents to own a home and continue on their path toward financial security.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0039.