



Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore, Inc.

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Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building Room 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 0509

Honorable Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee:

I am the Executive Director of Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore (NHS), and a resident of Baltimore City. Our organization believes that economic and social justice are a right for all residents and communities. We promote this belief by removing barriers of access to homeownership, helping resident access resources to maintain their homes, and supporting communities historically impacted by systemic disinvestment.

Our organization works primarily in the space of homeownership creation, preservation and comprehensive community development. We have worked for years to bring change to the tax sale system in Baltimore. We were successful in passing legislation that would have owner occupied properties, who had delinquent water bills, removed from the tax sale list and prevent them from being added to future tax sales. This, however, did not address buildings owned by non-profits. HB 0509 would keep real property owned by non-profit entities, who are exempt from taxation, and have less than \$750,000, exclusive of government funds, from being placed on the tax sale list for water/sewer bills. Non-profits provide critical services to our communities and should not be subject to tax sale.

It is our philosophical belief that NO property should end up in tax sale because of water bills. We ask that the Committee issue a *favorable* report on HB 0509.

Sincerely,

Daniel T. Ellis
Executive Director

