



Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore, Inc.

February 27, 2024

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE:** Senate Bill 953

Honorable Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

I am the Chief Executive Officer of Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore (NHS). 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.

Establishing a funding source for the community development fund is critically important as we look to invest in Maryland. There are several significant investments in the proposed budget to support community development across the state. Unfortunately, there are not corresponding operating funds to enable organizations to deploy the capital. The result is that smaller non-profit organizations are not able to access and deploy these funds. This disproportionately impacts historically disinvested communities of color across Maryland. Providing \$5 million of annual funding to the Community Development Fund will provide the resources needed for smaller organizations to be able to deploy available capital. This will help create more equity to support communities.

We ask that the committee provide a *favorable* report on SB953

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. T. Ellis", is written over a light blue background.

Daniel T. Ellis  
Chief Executive Officer



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