



Howard County Council Public Hearing: Council Resolution 96-2019

June 17, 2019

Testimony

Good evening Council Chair Rigby, Co-Chair Jones and Council members. As President of the Association of Community Services and representative of our 168 nonprofit member organizations and community advocates, it is my privilege to offer comments in support of Council Resolution 96-2019.

The five properties located in Columbia's Wilde Lake and Harper's Choice have provided affordable housing for 300 households for almost fifty years. Enabling Enterprise Community Homes Housing, through approval of the requested Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), will help offset the State's recently imposed tax increase on those properties. This PILOT is an important step that will help keep the properties operationally and financially stable until such time as Enterprise can begin their intended and the much-needed property redevelopment--redevelopment that will result in an expanded 600 unit mixed income community that will be financially sustainable and continue to provide safe, decent and affordable housing.

The recently updated Rental Housing Survey indicates that there are already over 5,000 too few affordable housing units in our community for low and very low-income households. This shortage of inventory underscores the need to preserve the affordable housing that we already have. And beyond preservation, this PILOT is an investment opportunity that will improve these decades old properties and in doing so improve the living conditions of 300 of our community's families.

Thank you for this opportunity to highlight our supports of and our concerns about the proposed FY 2020 Operations Budget. As always, we are available to respond to Council members' questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Driessen

Executive Director