

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Everyone in MD-01 should be able to live a good life right here. That means a place to live, schools that work, a job that pays enough to stay, and food on the table. In a country this rich, they should be attainable. This part of the plan is about how MD-01 communities stay alive.

IN THIS THEME

5.1 Schools That Work

5.2 Towns Worth Staying In

5.3 Real Jobs Here, Not Just Anywhere

5.4 Help for Small and Black-Owned Businesses

5.5 Get Where You're Going

5.6 Houses People Can Live In

BRIEF 5.1

Schools That Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

On March 20, 2025, the President signed an executive order directing Secretary Linda McMahon to begin closing the U.S. Department of Education. While Congress alone can abolish the agency, the administration has gutted it from within: staff cut from roughly 4,100 to about 2,200; nearly \$900 million in research contracts cancelled; the \$1.7 trillion student loan portfolio moved toward Treasury; civil rights investigations slowed to a near-halt; and at least 118 programs handed off to other federal agencies through interagency agreements. Andy Harris voted with the administration on these moves at every turn.

Maryland's Blueprint salary gap.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future imposes a minimum teacher salary of \$60,000 effective July 1, 2026. As of March 2026, twelve of Maryland's twenty-four school districts have not yet met the threshold. Counties on the Shore in particular do not have the local property tax base to absorb the local share of Blueprint costs without painful trade-offs against everything else the county is supposed to fund. By 2034, local districts statewide are projected to be paying \$700 million more annually than they would without the Blueprint.

Special education in MD-01.

Curriculum and staffing models for special education are state and local responsibilities, but federal IDEA dollars, federal compliance enforcement, federal teacher training programs, and federal grants for early intervention all shape what is possible. Congress promised in 1975 to cover 40 percent of the excess cost of special education through IDEA Part B. The actual federal share has hovered around 13 percent for years. The gap is the single biggest reason rural districts cannot afford the staffing model that works for kids whose needs are not the average.

Free school meals.

Title I schools currently can offer universal free meals through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which uses Medicaid and SNAP enrollment to identify schools where universal coverage makes sense. The OBBBA's Medicaid and SNAP narrowing (cross-reference Briefs 2.4 and 3.5) shrinks the CEP pipeline. Fewer kids on Medicaid and SNAP means fewer schools qualify for CEP, which means fewer kids get fed. Lower-Shore child food insecurity rates are the highest in Maryland.

The Somerset County school board.

In Somerset County, the local school board has spent the past year and a half firing its first Black superintendent, Dr. Ava Tasker-Mitchell, in violation of due process and replacing her with W. David Bromwell, the former Dorchester County superintendent; firing the school system's long-time legal counsel without a public vote and replacing them with politically aligned attorneys; attempting to defund every librarian position; ordering the removal of student-rights information about ICE encounters; and retreating to online meetings to avoid public comment. The Maryland State Board of Education ruled the firing violated her due process rights and publicly rebuked the board chair. The state Inspector General for Education found

the board violated state procurement law in how it hired its outside lawyers. The ACLU of Maryland has sued for records. In a county where the student body is majority Black, the all-white board's conduct is not an isolated personnel matter. It is a civil-rights problem hiding in plain sight.

Higher education and CTE.

MD-01 has Wor-Wic Community College, Chesapeake College, Cecil College, Harford Community College, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (Maryland's HBCU and 1890 land-grant institution), and Salisbury University. The foundation is real. What is missing is affordability for the students who need it most. UMES is among the most underfunded research universities in the state by historical formula. The 2023 federal letters to sixteen state governors (USDA and Department of Education, September 18, 2023) documented roughly \$13 billion in cumulative under-funding of 1890 land-grant HBCUs versus their 1862 land-grant counterparts. Maryland was on that list. UMES was the institution.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

In Somerset County, Dr. Ava Tasker-Mitchell, the first Black superintendent the county ever had, was fired by the local board in June 2025. The Maryland State Board of Education ruled the firing violated her due process rights and publicly rebuked the board chair's conduct toward her. The state Inspector General for Education found the board violated state procurement law in how it hired its outside lawyers. The ACLU of Maryland sued the board to force the release of public records. The board replaced her with W. David Bromwell, the former Dorchester County superintendent. Federal civil rights law, through Title VI and through the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, applies directly to what happened there. With OCR staffing cut and case backlogs ballooning, the federal mechanism that should be investigating discrimination patterns in school district hiring has been hollowed out. A restored OCR would mean Somerset County's Black students see federal civil rights law enforced rather than watching their superintendent get pushed out without consequence.

MY TAKE

A federal Department of Education that takes civil rights complaints seriously, fully funds IDEA, and protects Title I and free school meals is the bare minimum the federal government owes the kids in MD-01. Closing the Department, narrowing OCR, and routing federal money to private schools that can refuse children with disabilities is abandonment of those kids dressed up as reform.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

Rebuild the Department of Education.

- Vote against any legislation to close ED. Cosponsor legislation to restore staffing and statutory functions, including the Office for Civil Rights, the Institute of Education Sciences, Federal Student Aid, the IDEA monitoring office, and Title I administration.

- Cosponsor legislation requiring congressional approval for any future interagency program transfers. The 118 programs administratively transferred out of ED need to come home.
- Defend Title I and IDEA funding floors. Both must be protected from being routed through block grants or vouchers.
- Vote against federal voucher expansion. The voucher language buried in the OBBBA could direct \$30 to \$50 billion annually to private and religious schools with no civil-rights or accountability strings.

Federal funding for MD-01's eleven counties.

- Push for a federal school infrastructure program with rural-county and Title I weights that direct dollars to Wicomico, Somerset, Dorchester, Caroline, Cecil, and the rural sections of Harford. Old buildings, bad HVAC, water-fountain lead, and mold are not abstract problems on the Shore.
- Pursue an expanded Title II and Title IV-A federal grant pathway specifically targeting counties that cannot absorb the local share of state-mandated salary floors.
- Restore the federal Mental Health Services Professional and School-Based Mental Health Services grant programs, prioritized for counties below the national ratio for school counselors and psychologists.

Special education that actually educates.

- Cosponsor the IDEA Full Funding Act. Congress promised 40 percent in 1975. Actual federal share is closer to 13 percent.
- Expand HRSA and Department of Education grants for evidence-based autism teacher training. Build a Shore pipeline through UMES, Salisbury University, and Towson.
- Restore Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) staffing for IDEA enforcement.

Free school meals.

- Cosponsor the Expanding Access to School Meals Act of 2025 (H.R. 2680 / S. 1431). The simplest, most cost-effective school nutrition policy is to feed every kid, period.
- Cosponsor legislation reversing the OBBBA's Medicaid and SNAP narrowing (cross-reference Briefs 2.4 and 3.5), which on its own restores CEP eligibility for many Shore schools.
- Push USDA to lower the CEP "identified student" threshold further (already lowered from 40 to 25 percent).
- Defend and expand Summer EBT permanently.

School boards, accountability, and Somerset County.

- Fight to fully staff the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
- Defend the Civil Rights Data Collection. Resist administration efforts to reduce its scope.
- Expand the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence and the TEACH Grant program with Black-male-educator and minority-educator pipeline weights, directed to UMES, Salisbury University, and Bowie State for graduates who commit to teaching in high-needs MD-01 districts.
- Be a federal voice on what is happening in Somerset County. On the record. Without flinching.

Higher education.

- Cosponsor the College for All Act of 2025 (H.R. 3543 / S. 1832). Makes two years of community college tuition-free for in-state students, plus broader four-year affordability provisions.
- Cosponsor the PELL Act of 2025 (S. 1683). Doubling the Pell maximum is the single most consequential federal college affordability lever.
- Cosponsor HBCU funding parity legislation, with UMES specifically in mind. Use congressional oversight to push the federal land-grant funding formula toward parity.
- Expand Perkins V Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding with rural and apprenticeship weights.
- Restore and protect Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

In the District

A district office liaison for education, with focus areas including IDEA enforcement, IEP and 504 advocacy, civil rights complaints in MD-01 schools, and federal grant navigation for school districts.

IEP and 504 advocacy clinics across MD-01 counties, with parent-attorney advocates available pro bono or at low cost. Pursue federal funding for a permanent Parent Training and Information Center on the Shore through the Parent Center program.

Specific outreach to UMES, Salisbury University, Wor-Wic, Chesapeake, Cecil, and Harford Community Colleges on federal grant alignment, including HBCU funding parity, Perkins V, and TEACH Grant pipeline work.

A standing presence on Somerset County school board oversight. Public meetings attended, complaints to OCR documented, public reports issued.

Through Oversight

Public letters to ED's Office for Civil Rights on patterns affecting MD-01 districts, including Somerset County.

Demand committee hearings on the Department of Education dismantling, OCR backlog, and IDEA enforcement.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General and the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights on the Somerset County investigation and on disparate-discipline patterns across MD-01 districts.

Annual public report from the district office on federal education funding flowing to MD-01 by county and program.

THE HONEST PART

Saving the Department of Education from full dissolution depends on Congress holding the line. The administrative gutting can be slowed with appropriations and oversight pressure but cannot be fully reversed without a different administration.

IDEA full funding has been promised since 1975 and never delivered. The fight is incremental, every appropriations cycle. The work is making the case that this is the single biggest federal lever for special education in rural districts.

The Somerset County situation is a state-level personnel fight with a federal civil-rights overlay. Federal action depends on OCR being staffed and willing to investigate. State pressure (the State Board reprimand, the IG findings, the ACLU litigation) is doing the immediate work. Federal pressure makes the difference if the local board does not respond to state pressure.

UMES funding parity requires either a major appropriations push or a statutory change to the land-grant formula. Both are multi-year fights.

PSLF is contested every cycle. The work is keeping it intact and pushing for statutory protection.

RECEIPTS

BILLS

- IDEA Full Funding Act (H.R. 2598, Rep. Huffman; S. 1277, Sen. Van Hollen).
- Expanding Access to School Meals Act of 2025 (H.R. 2680 / S. 1431).
- College for All Act of 2025 (H.R. 3543 / S. 1832).
- PELL Act of 2025 (S. 1683).
- Pay Teachers Act (S. 2481) and Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence reauthorization (S. 3433).
- Strengthening HBCU and 1890 land-grant funding legislation.
- Perkins V Career and Technical Education reauthorization.

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, including Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV-A).
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Higher Education Act, including Pell Grant and PSLF provisions.
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins V).

SOURCES

- Department of Education Office for Civil Rights
- Maryland State Board of Education
- Maryland Inspector General for Education
- ACLU of Maryland Somerset County litigation
- 2023 federal letters on 1890 land-grant HBCU underfunding (USDA / Department of Education)
- Civil Rights Data Collection

PARTNERS

Maryland State Education Association. Maryland Association of Boards of Education. Maryland Association of Counties. NAACP Maryland State Conference. Caucus of African American Leaders. ACLU of Maryland. Wor-Wic Community College. Chesapeake College. Cecil College. Harford Community College. University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). Salisbury University. Bowie State University.

BRIEF 5.2

Towns Worth Staying In

WHAT'S HAPPENING

MD-01 has rising rents, rising home prices, falling vacancy in some markets, and rising vacancy in others where landlords reject applicants for not earning four times the rent. Slumlord conditions (leaky roofs, mold, aluminum wiring, busted heating, lead paint) are common across multiple counties, and county executives often side with landlords against complaining tenants. "Affordable housing" as a political phrase has been stretched to meaninglessness. The number of unhoused Americans is at the highest level on record. Rural rental dynamics make the squeeze worse: roughly 21 percent of rural renters nationally pay half or more of their income in rent, and the Eastern Shore counties have the smallest rental stock in the district to absorb that pressure.

There is no single federal lever that fixes this. Several have to work together to make rent attainable, housing conditions safe, and homeownership reachable.

Source-of-income discrimination.

Landlords across the country routinely reject applicants whose income source is a Section 8 voucher, SSI, SSDI, or veterans benefits. Maryland's HOME Act (Md. State Government § 20-702) bans the practice statewide, and Maryland is one of 23 states with this protection. Federal law does not protect tenants in the other 27 states.

Rental screening.

Landlords use credit scores, eviction history, and "four-times-the-rent" rules to screen tenants. In practice these tools function as exclusion mechanisms more than as risk assessments. A working family in Salisbury making \$45,000 a year cannot pass a "four-times-the-rent" rule on a \$1,500/month apartment, even though that family could pay the rent. The unit sits vacant and the family stays in worse housing.

Slumlord accountability.

Federal Section 8 housing has to meet HUD Housing Quality Standards. In practice, enforcement has been weak. Landlords can collect federal subsidy dollars while keeping units in unsafe condition, especially in rural counties with limited code enforcement capacity.

Homeownership barriers.

First-time homebuyers, especially first-generation homebuyers (most often Black families historically excluded from FHA and VA homeownership), face down-payment hurdles that are higher than the underlying affordability math actually justifies.

Lead paint and aluminum wiring.

MD-01 has a lot of older housing stock. Lead paint hazards persist. Aluminum wiring (common in homes built between roughly 1965 and 1972) is a fire hazard that most homeowners cannot afford to fully replace.

The 1998 Faircloth Amendment.

Federal law has prohibited net increases in public housing nationally since 1999. The Faircloth Amendment to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g)) caps each housing authority at the number of units it owned, assisted, or operated on October 1, 1999. Section 8 vouchers became the only federal tool for adding affordable units. The Harford County Housing Choice Voucher waitlist is closed (cut off December 15, 2025; oldest open applications date to March 1, 2023), and most Eastern Shore county housing authorities run similar waitlist arithmetic. The Faircloth cap is a federal statutory choice, not a constitutional limit, and can be repealed.

(Veteran-specific homelessness work, including HUD-VASH and SSVF, lives in Brief 1.4 under Theme 1.)

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

Consider a working family in Salisbury looking at a \$1,500-a-month apartment. The household income is \$45,000 a year. They can afford the rent. Their landlord uses a "four-times-the-rent" rule that requires gross income of \$6,000 a month, or \$72,000 a year. The family does not qualify and the apartment stays empty. The family moves into a worse unit owned by a landlord who will accept them, often a unit with deferred maintenance, mold, or safety issues. Federal law does not currently prohibit the four-times-the-rent rule. Maryland does not currently prohibit it either. The result is concentrated poverty in the worst housing stock in the county, while better units sit vacant.

That household is one of the 37 percent of Harford County families that United Way classifies as ALICE: above the federal poverty line but unable to afford basic costs. Lower Shore counties almost certainly run higher. ALICE is the working-family category that federal poverty statistics miss, and it is where the housing crunch in MD-01 hits hardest.

MY TAKE

I support new construction, but not the pretense that more market-rate units priced for people making four times the rent solve a housing crisis driven partly by who is allowed to live in the units we already have. Attainability is a discipline different from supply.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

On attainability.

- Cosponsor federal source-of-income discrimination legislation. Federal law should prohibit landlords from refusing applicants because their income source is a Section 8 voucher, SSI, SSDI, or veterans benefits. Maryland has a state law; federal law should follow.
- Cosponsor rental screening reform legislation. Limit the use of credit scores, eviction history, and "four-times-the-rent" rules in tenant screening.

- Cosponsor the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515) to expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) with a rural set-aside. Push for deeper income targeting (30 and 50 percent of Area Median Income) rather than allowing all units to cluster at 60 percent.
- Cosponsor the Eviction Right to Counsel Act of 2025 (H.R. 4761 / S. 2463) for tenants facing eviction.
- Cosponsor the Neighborhood Homes Investment Act (H.R. 2854 / S. 1686). Expand FHA homeownership programs and federal down-payment assistance, with deeper benefits for first-generation homebuyers.
- Cosponsor Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation. The 1998 cap (42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g)) prevents any net increase in U.S. public housing and is the single biggest federal block on adding new deeply affordable units. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried a House-passed repeal amendment in 2020. Cosponsor the current vehicle and push for inclusion in the next HUD/THUD appropriations cycle. Where outright repeal is not yet politically possible, expand HUD's Faircloth-to-RAD program, which converts unused Faircloth authority into deeply affordable units.

On landlord accountability.

- Push HUD to actually withhold and recover funds from landlords who take Section 8 dollars and fail to meet Housing Quality Standards.
- Expand HUD's Healthy Homes program and the Lead Hazard Reduction Grant program for older housing stock prevalent throughout MD-01.
- Cosponsor federal protections against retaliatory eviction.

In the District

A district office liaison for housing issues, with focus on tenant rights, source-of-income discrimination complaints, lead paint and aluminum wiring remediation, and first-time homebuyer support. Coordinates with Maryland Legal Aid, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Maryland Mortgage Program (the state-run first-time homebuyer pathway), and the Maryland Coalition to End Homelessness.

A specific function for Section 8 voucher holders facing landlord rejection. The district office tracks the pattern and files HUD complaints where appropriate.

Homebuyer education sessions across MD-01 counties, in partnership with HUD-approved housing counseling agencies and Tri-County Community Action.

Annual public report on housing conditions in MD-01 by county, including code enforcement complaints, eviction filings, and Section 8 voucher utilization.

Through Oversight

Public letters to HUD on Housing Quality Standards enforcement against MD-01 landlords with documented violations.

Demand committee hearings on rental screening practices and the four-times-the-rent rule.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General on enforcement of the state source-of-income law and on landlord retaliation cases.

THE HONEST PART

The four-times-the-rent rule and source-of-income discrimination are state-by-state issues. Maryland has acted. Federal action would protect tenants in states that have not. The work is keeping the legislation alive and finding bipartisan vehicles.

The LIHTC expansion is a bipartisan opportunity in some Congresses. The deeper income targeting (30 percent of AMI rather than 60 percent) is harder politically because developers prefer the higher tier. The work is making the case for the targeting reform.

HUD Housing Quality Standards enforcement depends on HUD staffing and on the secretary's willingness to enforce. Federal pressure can help; administration cooperation matters more.

The "just build more" debate is genuinely contested in housing policy circles. The honest position is that supply matters but attainability and tenant protections matter as much. New construction that prices out the people who currently need housing is not a solution to the housing crisis.

The other side of the cost ledger is that housing instability is itself expensive. Children's HealthWatch estimates avoidable health and special-education costs at \$111 billion over 10 years from housing instability among families with young children. The federal government already pays those downstream costs through Medicaid, IDEA Part B, and emergency room utilization. Stable housing is the cheaper line item.

RECEIPTS

BILLS

- Federal source-of-income discrimination legislation in the 119th Congress includes the Fair Housing Improvement Act (S. 2827 / H.R. 5443), the Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act (H.R. 206), the Choice in Affordable Housing Act (H.R. 3133), and the Discrimination Among Housing Voucher Holders Act (S. 934).
- Rental screening reform legislation in the 119th Congress includes the Fair Tenant Screening Act (H.R. 4369), the Rental Application Fee Reduction Act (H.R. 4100), and related provisions in S. 1465.
- Eviction Right to Counsel Act of 2025 (H.R. 4761 / S. 2463).
- Neighborhood Homes Investment Act (H.R. 2854 / S. 1686).
- Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act / LIHTC expansion (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515).
- Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation (current 119th Congress vehicle to be confirmed). Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried the 2020 House-passed amendment.

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES

- Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. § 3601 et seq.).
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- HUD Housing Quality Standards.
- HUD Healthy Homes Program.
- HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program.
- Federal Housing Administration (FHA) homeownership programs.

- Faircloth Amendment to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-276), codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g). Caps net public housing at October 1, 1999 levels.
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program (administrative workaround that converts unused Faircloth authority into deeply affordable units).

SOURCES

- HUD: [hud.gov](https://www.hud.gov)
- HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland Mortgage Program: [mmp.maryland.gov](https://www.mmp.maryland.gov)
- Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, Source of Income Guidance (Aug 2025)
- National Coalition for the Homeless on the Faircloth Amendment
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program
- Children's HealthWatch on housing instability cost
- UnitedForALICE
- National Low Income Housing Coalition
- Maryland Legal Aid
- Hunter Baker, "Combating Harford's Housing Crisis," Master's Capstone, American Public University System (February 2026)

PARTNERS

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Maryland Legal Aid. Maryland Mortgage Program. National Low Income Housing Coalition. Maryland Coalition to End Homelessness. Tri-County Community Action. Eastern Shore Land Conservancy. Harford Community Action Agency (HCAA). Havre de Grace Housing Authority (HDGHA). Local fair housing organizations.

BRIEF 5.3

Real Jobs Here, Not Just Anywhere

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Growing up on the Lower Shore, you are told the only way to make it is to leave. Generations of Eastern Shore young people have heard that, and most of them have left. The lower-Shore economy is dominated by retail and poultry. Amazon warehouses have spread across the district. They hire, but the working conditions are well-documented. Maryland's state economic development infrastructure has not aggressively pursued MD-01 for substantive job placement, and the federal delegation's ability to direct industrial siting has not been used in the way it has been used for other parts of the state.

The data center push.

The data center boom is heading to MD-01. Major proposals are active in Baltimore and Harford counties. Pitches are coming down the Shore framed as "union construction jobs." What the experience in Northern Virginia, Texas, and Arizona has shown is that data centers are massive water consumers (millions of gallons per day per facility), massive electricity consumers (driving rate increases for everyone else on the grid), and massive land users with permanent operations workforces in the dozens, not the hundreds. The construction phase brings out-of-state crews. The companies bring their own engineers. The promised local hiring rarely materializes at scale.

The federal funding that has not flowed here.

The CHIPS and Science Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law together represent the largest federal industrial policy investment in a generation. Most of those dollars have flowed to other parts of the country. MD-01 has not been on the map for green manufacturing, EV battery, or grid-modernization investment.

The offshore wind opportunity.

The Maryland Offshore Wind project (cross-reference Brief 3.2) is a multi-billion-dollar industrial program. Sparrows Point, Tradepoint Atlantic, and Salisbury could be supply-chain hubs. The federal manufacturing tax credits and workforce funding to make that happen are within Congress's reach.

The workforce pipeline.

Wor-Wic Community College, Chesapeake College, Cecil College, and Harford Community College all run trade and technical programs that feed the construction and manufacturing economy. The IBEW, the Operating Engineers, the Steamfitters, and the Sheet Metal Workers all run apprenticeship programs. The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides funding that has not consistently flowed to MD-01.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

The data center push is the most concrete example of the wrong kind of "investment" coming to MD-01. A data center proposal pitched as bringing "union construction jobs" to a Lower Shore county sounds good until the numbers come out. A typical hyperscale data center consumes between three and five million gallons of water per day for cooling and hundreds of megawatts of electricity, driving water and power demand in a region where Vienna and other Shore towns already cannot fix their drinking water systems (cross-reference Brief 3.1). The construction phase is real but short-term and largely staffed by out-of-state union crews, while the permanent operations workforce is typically thirty to fifty people for a facility that occupies hundreds of acres. The county loses farmland or open space, gains an industrial water and power consumer, and gets nothing close to the job count promised in the pitch.

That is the realistic outcome of saying yes to a data center proposal. The better play is to direct the same energy toward fighting for the federal industrial investment that creates long-term jobs in MD-01.

MY TAKE

I am a no on data centers in MD-01. The math does not work for our water, our land, our power grid, or our workforce. There is no better data-center deal worth negotiating; the work is pursuing the federal industrial investment that creates long-term local jobs. I am the candidate to bring jobs that hire people who already live here and that do not leave us with depleted aquifers and blackout warnings.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

Direct federal industrial dollars to MD-01.

- Work the appropriations and Commerce, DOE, and EDA committee channels to put MD-01 on the map for green manufacturing, offshore wind supply chain, EV battery, and grid-modernization investment.
- Fight for federal manufacturing tax credits and workforce funding to land Maryland Offshore Wind supply chain work at Sparrows Point, Tradepoint Atlantic, and Salisbury (cross-reference Brief 3.2).
- Push reforms going beyond the OBBBA's existing Opportunity Zone reporting requirements (P.L. 119-21 made OZs permanent with new accountability provisions, but the new framework still does not condition tax benefits on verified local hiring outcomes). Many MD-01 census tracts are designated Opportunity Zones, but the program has produced limited verified job creation in places like the Lower Shore.
- Direct EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grants to MD-01 industrial site readiness. If we want companies to come, our sites have to be shovel-ready.

Workforce development.

- Expand registered apprenticeship funding. Require federally funded construction (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, CHIPS, Inflation Reduction Act) to use registered apprentices.

- Direct WIOA funding to MD-01 community colleges (Wor-Wic, Chesapeake, Cecil, Harford) with green-jobs and healthcare-careers tracks.
- Expand federal clean-energy tax credit prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements to additional clean-energy and manufacturing programs.

Data centers: federal disclosure and procurement standards.

- Cosponsor legislation requiring federal disclosure of data center water and power consumption. If a project is going to consume the water of a small city and the electricity of a small region, the public deserves to know before approval.
- Cosponsor legislation requiring PJM grid impact studies for new data center siting.
- Use federal procurement authority. The federal government, through GSA cloud contracts and DOD computing requirements, is one of the largest customers of hyperscale data center capacity. Federal procurement standards for water-efficient cooling, on-site renewable generation, and locally-hired permanent workforces are within Congress's authority.

In the District

A district office liaison for federal industrial and workforce funding, with focus areas including CHIPS, IRA, and BIL implementation, EDA grants, WIOA workforce funding, and registered apprenticeship coordination.

Annual public report on federal industrial dollars flowing to MD-01 by program, county, and recipient.

A standing public position on data center proposals in MD-01: no, with the math available on request. The district office documents the water and power consumption data, the actual permanent-job counts, and the grid impact for any active proposal.

Specific outreach to IBEW Local 24, IBEW Local 26, the Building Trades Councils, the Operating Engineers, the Steamfitters, and the Sheet Metal Workers on apprenticeship pipeline alignment with MD-01 community colleges.

A sustained partnership with Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Salisbury Committee, and the Maryland Department of Commerce on industrial site readiness across MD-01.

Through Oversight

Public letters to Commerce, Department of Energy, and EDA on grant flow patterns to Maryland and to MD-01 specifically.

Demand committee hearings on Opportunity Zone job creation outcomes and reform proposals.

Public letters to GSA and DOD on federal hyperscaler procurement standards.

Coordinate with PJM (the regional transmission organization) and with the Maryland Public Service Commission on data center grid impact analyses.

THE HONEST PART

CHIPS, IRA, and BIL implementation depends on the administration. Federal pressure can move some grant flow toward MD-01, but the broader allocation pattern is set by Commerce, DOE, and EDA leadership. The work is making the case persistently and being ready when the political math changes.

Opportunity Zone reform has bipartisan support in some quarters but has not passed. The work is keeping the reform legislation alive.

The data center fight is genuinely difficult because the proposals come with money and political pressure. Saying no requires standing up to local political pressure that wants the construction-phase jobs and the property-tax revenue. The work is making the case publicly with the actual numbers.

The offshore wind supply chain opportunity depends on the Maryland Offshore Wind project actually being built (cross-reference Brief 3.2). If the litigation and the federal hostility derail the project, the supply chain opportunity goes with it.

RECEIPTS

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.
- Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (manufacturing tax credits).
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grants.
- Opportunity Zone tax benefits (Internal Revenue Code Section 1400Z).
- Registered Apprenticeship under Department of Labor.
- GSA federal cloud contracts; DOD computing requirements.

SOURCES

- Department of Commerce CHIPS implementation
- Economic Development Administration
- Department of Labor apprenticeship
- PJM Interconnection
- Maryland Department of Commerce

PARTNERS

Maryland Department of Commerce. Maryland Energy Administration. Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore. Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce. Greater Salisbury Committee. Eastern Shore SBDC (Small Business Development Center). Maryland AFL-CIO. IBEW Locals 24 and 26. Operating Engineers Local 37. Steamfitters Local 602. Sheet Metal Workers Local 100. Maryland Building Trades Councils. Wor-Wic Community College. Chesapeake College. Cecil College. Harford Community College.

BRIEF 5.4

Help for Small and Black-Owned Businesses

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The Small Business Administration is being hollowed out. The administration's FY2026 budget proposed eliminating 15 of the SBA's 16 entrepreneurial development programs and adding fees on the 7(a) loan program. The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), the only federal agency dedicated to minority-owned businesses, has been targeted for elimination. New SBA underwriting rules took effect June 1, 2025, with stricter ownership and credit requirements that are already affecting Black-owned applicants. SBA 7(a) lending has declined sharply year over year. Congress restored some funding in the FY2026 appropriations act, but the agency is operating in retreat.

MD-01 has thousands of small businesses. Many are family-owned, many are veteran-owned, and a meaningful number are Black-owned, particularly in Salisbury, Cambridge, and the lower Shore. They need capital, paperwork help, and a federal partner who picks up the phone.

The capital access problem.

Conventional banks have systematically under-served small businesses in rural districts and Black-owned businesses in particular. The federal toolkit for this includes SBA 7(a) and 504 loans, microloans, the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, and USDA's Rural Business Investment Company (RBIC) program. Each of these has been used at smaller scale than the need on the Shore actually requires.

The 8(a) and minority set-aside fight.

The SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program and other minority-owned business set-asides have been challenged in recent litigation and narrowed by administrative rule changes. These programs have been a significant pathway to federal contracting for Black-owned and women-owned businesses for decades.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

Consider a Black-owned small business in Salisbury, three years old, with steady revenue and a clear growth plan. The owner walks into a conventional bank for a \$250,000 working capital loan. The bank declines. The owner tries SBA 7(a). Under the June 2025 underwriting rules, her ownership structure and personal credit history disqualify her, even though her business cash flow easily supports the loan. She moves to a CDFI lender, who can underwrite her, but the CDFI does not have the capital pool to write the full \$250,000 at the rate she needs. The loan does not close. She does not hire the two employees she was planning to hire. The growth stalls. The federal toolkit exists for exactly her situation. None of the pieces, in their current state, actually completed the financing. Restoring the SBA, defending MBDA, expanding SSBCI, capitalizing CDFIs, and exploring an RBIC for the Shore are the way that loan closes.

MY TAKE

The federal government either makes capital available to small businesses that conventional banks will not touch, or it does not. Talking about supporting small business while letting SBA and MBDA be hollowed out is having it both ways. What matters here is whether the loans close.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

Restore the SBA.

- Vote against any further cuts to SBA entrepreneurial development programs (Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, SCORE).
- Cosponsor or introduce legislation to statutorily protect the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) from administrative defunding.
- Defend the 8(a) Business Development Program and other set-aside programs that have helped Black-owned and women-owned businesses access federal contracts, in light of recent legal and administrative challenges.

Capital access through credit enhancement.

- Cosponsor reauthorization and expansion of the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). SSBCI is a federal-to-state credit-enhancement program. Push for set-asides for very rural districts (Delmarva qualifies) and for businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.
- Strengthen CDFI lending in MD-01. Defend CDFI Fund appropriations and direct technical-assistance grants to expand CDFI presence on the Shore. Community Development Financial Institutions and Minority Depository Institutions are the lenders most willing to underwrite Black-owned and rural small businesses.
- Explore a Rural Business Investment Company (RBIC) for the Shore. USDA's RBIC program licenses private equity funds to invest in rural small businesses with federal credit support. Work with USDA Rural Development and Maryland partners to evaluate whether MD-01 can host one.

In the District

A dedicated Small Business Liaison on staff. Not as a side-of-the-desk job. One person whose entire role is helping constituents navigate SBA loans, EIDL, federal grants, and state programs.

Grant and loan workshops, rotated across the district through Salisbury, Cambridge, Easton, Bel Air, Aberdeen, Edgewood, and Pocomoke. Walk people through 7(a), 504, microloan, MBDA, USDA Rural Development, and state programs. Application help in the room.

An MD-01 Small Business Week, co-hosted with chambers of commerce and the Tri-County Council, with a specific track for Black-owned and minority-owned businesses focused on capital access, federal contracting, and supply chain certification.

A specific outreach to Maryland Capital Enterprises, the Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce, and local SBDC offices on coordinated capital access for MD-01 small businesses.

Through Oversight

Public letters to SBA on the June 2025 underwriting rule changes and their impact on Black-owned applicants.

Demand committee hearings on MBDA defense and on 8(a) program protections.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General on enforcement of fair lending laws and on patterns of discrimination in conventional bank lending in MD-01.

Annual public report on federal small business funding flowing to MD-01 by program, county, and recipient demographics where available.

THE HONEST PART

Restoring SBA staffing depends on appropriations and on the administrator's posture. Federal pressure can preserve programs but cannot fully reverse the gutting without a different administration.

MBDA defense is a year-by-year fight. Statutory protection legislation has been introduced in prior Congresses without passing. The work is keeping it alive and finding a vehicle.

The 8(a) set-aside program is being narrowed by litigation and administrative rule. The work is defending the program structurally and supporting the legal defense.

CDFI capitalization is a matter of appropriations and Treasury allocation. Federal pressure can direct dollars to MD-01-serving CDFIs.

The RBIC for the Shore is exploratory. It depends on private fund managers willing to take on rural Eastern Shore deal flow with federal credit backing. The work in the first term is the evaluation and the partnership-building.

RECEIPTS

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Small Business Administration (SBA) 7(a), 504, microloan programs.
- SBA 8(a) Business Development Program.
- Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).
- State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI).
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund.
- USDA Rural Business Investment Program (RBIC).
- USDA Rural Development.

SOURCES

- SBA: [sba.gov](https://www.sba.gov)

- Maryland Capital Enterprises
- Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce
- Salisbury Wicomico Economic Development
- Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore

PARTNERS

Maryland Capital Enterprises. Salisbury Wicomico Economic Development. Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore. Greater Salisbury Committee. Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce. Local SBDC offices (Wor-Wic, Salisbury University, UMES). Eastern Shore Land Conservancy on rural development. Local CDFIs serving MD-01.

BRIEF 5.5

Get Where You're Going

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Federal transportation funding is the single biggest source of money flowing into MD-01 roads, bridges, transit, and EV charging. That funding is the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL / IIJA, 2021), and its surface transportation authorization expires September 30, 2026. The next Congress writes the replacement. Whoever holds MD-01 in 2027 votes on what comes next, and Andy Harris voted against the law that the district has been spending for five years.

The IIJA reauthorization cliff.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL, P.L. 117-58) authorized roughly \$567 billion in federal transportation spending over five years (FY2022 through FY2026). The Federal Highway Administration formula, the Bridge Formula Program, the Bridge Investment Program, the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program, the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program, the PROTECT resilience program, and the FTA transit formulas (Sections 5310, 5311, 5307, 5337, 5339) all sit on top of the IIJA framework. All of them reset October 1, 2026. The Highway Trust Fund itself is heading toward insolvency: CRS estimates a \$166 to \$199 billion revenue-outlay gap over a five-to-six-year reauthorization at current spending. Without action, FTA payments slow in third quarter FY2027 and FHWA payments slow in second quarter FY2028. The 2027 Congress writes whatever replaces this, including how the Highway Trust Fund gets repaired.

The Bay Bridge replacement.

The Maryland Transportation Authority has endorsed a preferred alternative to remove and replace both existing Chesapeake Bay Bridge spans (built 1952 and 1973) on the existing corridor at Sandy Point. Estimated cost: \$14.8 to \$16 billion. The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are expected from FHWA in November 2026. MDTA asked for roughly \$739 million in federal funding in its June 2025 18-month plan. A replacement at this scale cannot be tolled into existence on its own; it requires federal grants (Bridge Investment Program, INFRA, Mega) and likely federal loans (TIFIA, RRIF). The Eastern Shore endpoint is in MD-01. Whoever sits in this seat in 2027 will be in the room when the federal share is decided.

The Aberdeen federal worker commute.

Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) employs more than 21,000 civilian, military, and contractor workers, the largest employer in Harford County. The commute is either I-95 (heavy peak congestion) or the MARC Penn Line (graded F in early 2026 commuter-rail reliability surveys, with ridership recovering but still well below pre-COVID levels). The Susquehanna River Bridge replacement on the Northeast Corridor (Amtrak, \$2.1 billion, IIJA-funded, construction underway 2024-2030) sits between Perryville and Havre de Grace and is one of the largest federal infrastructure projects physically located in MD-01. It is funded by the law Andy Harris voted against.

Rural transit and watermen access.

Five locally-operated transit systems serve MD-01: Shore Transit (Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset), Delmarva Community Transit (Dorchester, Talbot, Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's), Cecil Transit, and Harford Transit Link. All five run on FTA Section 5311 rural formula grants, Section 5310 senior and disability formula grants, and Section 5339 bus capital grants. Sunday and evening service is thin to nonexistent. Lower-Shore healthcare access (TidalHealth Salisbury, PRMC, Atlantic General) depends heavily on Section 5310 paratransit. The Smith Island Crisfield ferry, the Tilghman Island Knapps Narrows bridge, and the Hooper's Island bridges (losing roughly two acres a month to sea-level rise) all depend on federal Marine Highway funding, FTA Ferry Boat formula, the PROTECT resilience program, and the Bridge Investment Program. All of these federal sources reset with reauthorization.

The NEVI fight.

The IJJA's National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program funds DC fast-charger build-out along designated corridors. Maryland's NEVI plan covers US-50 (Bay Bridge to Ocean City), I-95 (Cecil and Harford), and US-13 (Salisbury to Pocomoke). The FY2026 transportation appropriations bill rescinded roughly \$500 million in unobligated state NEVI funds without touching the \$4.1 billion contract authority; the administration's full claw-back attempt was rejected. The NEVI program is on the House Republican target list every appropriations cycle. The state's stated design goal is no driver crosses the Bay Bridge and ends up stranded between fast chargers.

Andy Harris's record.

Andy Harris voted **NO** on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (H.R. 3684, House Roll Call 369, November 5, 2021), the only Maryland House member to do so. The bill provided roughly \$8 billion for Maryland highways, transit, ports, and broadband. He sits on the House Appropriations Committee and let the FY2026 NEVI rescission and the \$291 million Amtrak Northeast Corridor cut go through. He has publicly opposed Bay Bridge toll hikes (a 2025 press conference called the proposed 320 percent hike anti-family and anti-business) while also opposing the federal funding that would let MDTA replace the bridge without those toll hikes. The Common Sense Eastern Shore project has documented him claiming credit for IJJA-funded projects in MD-01 he voted against.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

A federal civilian worker at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County faces the same daily commute math every day: I-95 means an unpredictable 45-minute to 90-minute drive depending on truck volume and weather, while the MARC Penn Line means a less unpredictable but still unreliable train that has been graded F in commuter-rail reliability surveys with ridership at roughly half of pre-COVID levels. The Penn Line's Susquehanna River Bridge is being replaced under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (a \$2.1 billion federal project) but the rest of the line still runs on aging signals, undersized stations, and a tunnel system in Baltimore that has been a known choke point for two decades.

Andy Harris voted no on the law that funds the Susquehanna Bridge replacement, the broader Penn Line capital program, the I-95 Tydings Bridge replacement, the MARC fleet replacement, and the federal share of any Bay Bridge rebuild. The 21,000 federal workers at APG depend on every one of those federal investments to get to work. The federal worker who commutes from Bel Air to APG is paying into a federal transportation system that her congressman has spent five years voting against.

The same family-and-mobility math touches every household she is connected to in MD-01. Her mother in Cambridge depends on Section 5310 paratransit through Delmarva Community Transit for dialysis appointments at TidalHealth Salisbury. Her brother running a charter boat out of Tilghman depends on the Knapps Narrows bridge staying in working order. Her last Saturday at her parents' house in Easton included two and a half hours of Bay Bridge eastbound traffic. The transportation system that defines MD-01 daily life is the system her congressman voted against funding.

MY TAKE

Transportation is the basic logistics of being able to get to work, to the doctor, to the boat ramp, and to your family. The federal money that built and maintains the roads, bridges, transit lines, and ferries this district uses every day is the law Andy Harris voted against. The next Congress writes the replacement law. That is the vote on the November 2026 ballot, whether it gets named that way or not.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

On the IIJA reauthorization (the big one):

- Vote for a fully-funded surface transportation reauthorization at IIJA-or-better baseline funding when the next law comes to the floor in 2027.
- Defend the Highway Trust Fund through a durable, bipartisan revenue fix that includes electric-vehicle and vehicle-miles-traveled contributions without disproportionately hammering rural drivers who cannot avoid driving.
- Defend the Bridge Formula Program with rural set-asides for off-system county-owned bridges. The Lower Shore has hundreds of pre-1970, weight-restricted county bridges that this program was specifically designed for.
- Defend the PROTECT resilience program for sea-level-rise adaptation on US-50, US-13, and Smith Island access.
- Defend NEVI contract authority and state apportionments. Block additional rescissions.

On the Bay Bridge:

- Push for federal grant funding (Bridge Investment Program, INFRA, Mega) to cover a meaningful share of the \$14.8 to \$16 billion replacement cost, with the explicit goal of holding down MDTA toll increases for Eastern Shore commuters.
- Coordinate with MD-03 (Rep. Sarah Elfreth, the western Bay Bridge endpoint) on a unified Maryland Democratic delegation position before the November 2026 Final EIS / ROD lands.

On Amtrak and MARC:

- Defend Amtrak Northeast Corridor capital funding in every appropriations cycle. Restore the FY2026 \$291 million Northeast Corridor cut.
- Push for federal capital grants for Aberdeen Penn Line station upgrades, Edgewood capacity work, and Martin State Airport station accessibility.

- Defend FTA Section 5337 State of Good Repair for fixed-guideway capital. The Penn Line and the Susquehanna Bridge rebuild depend on it.

On rural transit and ferries:

- Defend FTA Sections 5310 (seniors and disabilities), 5311 (rural areas), 5307 (urbanized), 5337 (state of good repair), and 5339 (bus and bus facilities) at IIJA-or-better levels. These are the operating-cash sources for Shore Transit, Delmarva Community Transit, Cecil Transit, and Harford Transit Link.
- Push for federal Marine Highway designation for the Crisfield-Smith Island route, plus FTA Ferry Boat formula increases.
- Push for Bridge Investment Program funding for Tilghman's Knapps Narrows bridge replacement when the existing 1998 bascule reaches its replacement window.
- Push for PROTECT formula funding for Hooper's Island bridge resilience work.

On airports:

- Defend FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding for Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport (SBY) and Easton/Newnam Field (ESN). SBY's Runway 14/32 rehabilitation needs Phase 2 and Phase 3 grants.

In the District

A district office liaison for federal transportation funding, working with the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA), the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, the Mid-Shore Regional Council, and the Upper Shore Regional Council. The liaison helps local jurisdictions and transit operators apply for federal competitive grants (RAISE, INFRA, Mega, Bridge Investment Program, Safe Streets and Roads for All) and tracks formula-program flow into MD-01.

A specific outreach to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Naval Air Station Patuxent River (which draws Lower Shore commuters), and the federal civilian workforce on commuter rail and highway capacity issues. Coordinate with Brief 1.1 federal workforce work.

A standing relationship with Smith Island United, the Tilghman Watermen's Association, Friends of Cambridge Harbor, and the Lower Shore watermen's associations on federal transportation and waterway-access funding.

A standing relationship with Disability Rights Maryland and AARP Maryland on Section 5310 paratransit and Section 5311 rural transit funding fights.

Annual public report on federal transportation funding flowing into MD-01 by program and county (FHWA, FTA, FAA, USACE, NOAA Marine Highway). Posted online.

Through Oversight

Public letters to the Federal Highway Administration on the Bay Bridge replacement Final EIS / ROD process and the federal share question.

Public letters to the Federal Transit Administration on Section 5311 rural transit awards and Section 5310 paratransit awards for MD-01 jurisdictions.

Demand committee hearings on the FY2027 surface transportation reauthorization and on the Highway Trust Fund insolvency question.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General and the Maryland Department of Transportation on federal grant flow to Maryland and on enforcement of federal-aid highway requirements.

THE HONEST PART

The next surface transportation reauthorization is a multi-year fight that does not come down to one vote. The Highway Trust Fund insolvency question (raise the gas tax, charge EVs, cut spending, or some combination) is politically painful in every direction. Nobody in either party wants to be on the record raising the gas tax, and nobody wants to be on the record cutting federal road money. The work is finding a durable revenue fix that does not just kick the problem to FY2030.

The Bay Bridge replacement is a state asset. The federal share is what a member of Congress can affect; the toll structure is set by MDTA. Pushing for the largest possible federal share is the lever that keeps tolls from absorbing the whole cost.

NEVI is being attacked every appropriations cycle. The administrative claw-backs continue regardless of any single vote. The work is annual defense of contract authority and state apportionments through the appropriations process.

Rural transit operators (Shore Transit, DCT, Cecil, Harford Transit Link) operate on extremely thin margins. Federal Section 5311 cuts hit fastest in places that already have the least service. The fight is preserving the formula and pushing for set-aside increases for paratransit and weekend service.

The MARC Penn Line reliability problem is partly a federal capital problem (Susquehanna Bridge, B&P Tunnel, Aberdeen station) and partly a state operations problem (MTA management, dispatching, equipment maintenance). Federal pressure can move the capital piece. The state operations piece is Annapolis's job.

RECEIPTS

BILLS

- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), Public Law 117-58, signed November 15, 2021. Surface transportation authorization expires September 30, 2026. Total ~\$567B over five years.
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization (FY2027 onward). To be drafted; will be the central transportation bill of the next Congress.
- FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024, Public Law 118-63. Five-year authorization through FY2028.
- Federal Marine Highway and Ferry Boat formula reauthorization vehicles (multiple bills across recent Congresses).

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): Federal-Aid Highway Program, Bridge Formula Program, Bridge Investment Program (BIP), Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program, PROTECT resilience program, Safe Streets and Roads for All.
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA): Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities), Section 5311 (Rural Areas), Section 5307 (Urbanized Areas), Section 5337 (State of Good Repair), Section 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities), Capital Investment Grants.
- National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. \$5B over five years.
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA): Amtrak Northeast Corridor capital, Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail.

- USDOT competitive multimodal grants: RAISE, INFRA, Mega.
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): Airport Improvement Program (AIP).
- USACE Civil Works (waterways, ports, jetties, harbor maintenance).
- NOAA Marine Highway program.
- Highway Trust Fund (gas tax 18.4¢/gallon, diesel 24.4¢/gallon; not raised since 1993).

MARYLAND AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT): SHA (highways), MTA (transit and MARC), MAA (airports), Port Administration, MVA.
- Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA): Bay Bridge, Hatem Bridge, Tydings Bridge, Key Bridge replacement, BWI tolls.
- Maryland Transit Administration: MARC Penn Line, locally-operated transit systems oversight.
- Locally-operated transit systems (LOTS): Shore Transit, Delmarva Community Transit, Cecil Transit, Harford Transit Link.

SOURCES

- House Clerk roll call records: clerk.house.gov/Votes
- Bay Crossing Study: baycrossingstudy.com
- Maryland Transportation Authority: mdta.maryland.gov
- Maryland NEVI Plan: evplan.mdot.maryland.gov/nevi-program
- MTA Locally Operated Transit Systems: mta.maryland.gov/lots
- CRS R47573 Highway Trust Fund
- CRS R48845 Surface Transportation Reauthorization
- Transportation for America FY26 THUD analysis
- CNS Maryland on Maryland's IIJA share (November 9, 2021)
- Common Sense Eastern Shore on Harris IIJA credit-claiming
- Andy Harris on Bay Bridge tolls: harris.house.gov

PARTNERS

Maryland Department of Transportation. Maryland Transportation Authority. Maryland Transit Administration. Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore (operates Shore Transit). Mid-Shore Regional Council. Upper Shore Regional Council. Greater Salisbury Committee. Maryland Farm Bureau (rural roads, weight limits, ag freight). IBEW Local 24 and Local 26. Operating Engineers Local 37. Steamfitters Local 602. Sheet Metal Workers Local 100. Maryland Building Trades Councils. Bicycle Coalition of Maryland. Disability Rights Maryland. AARP Maryland. Smith Island United. Tilghman Watermen's Association. Friends of the Cambridge Harbor. NAACP Maryland State Conference. Sierra Club Maryland Chapter. Smart Growth America / Transportation for America.

BRIEF 5.6

Houses People Can Live In

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maryland law gives every county and municipality the authority to use four housing tools that have already been adopted and are working in other parts of the state. Most MD-01 counties have used few or none of them. The federal role is to support and fund the tools, not to dictate which counties use them.

Tenant unions and tenant power.

Tenant unions are membership-based renter organizations that bargain collectively over rent increases, maintenance, and eviction protections. They are different from building-level tenant associations: a tenant union covers a larger geographic area and negotiates with multiple landlords. Maryland law does not prohibit tenant unions, and a county can formally recognize them and create a "tenant support office" inside its housing department to handle mediation. Few MD-01 counties have done so. Federal action: HUD pre-development and capacity grants to fund the tenant-support function; federal protection against retaliatory eviction (cross-reference Brief 5.2).

Inclusionary zoning (IZ).

IZ requires developers of new residential projects to dedicate a share of new units to below-market affordable housing, defined by income brackets. Maryland's Land Use Article § 7-401 explicitly authorizes counties and municipalities to adopt IZ ordinances. Maryland jurisdictions that have done so include Montgomery County (the country's first IZ program, 1974, 12.5 percent mandatory minimum, 17,300+ affordable units produced), Howard County (10-15 percent set-aside), Baltimore City (operational since July 2024), plus Annapolis, Frederick City, Gaithersburg, Rockville, and Charles, Frederick, and Anne Arundel counties. No MD-01 county has adopted IZ. A new 200-unit market-rate development in Easton or Salisbury produces zero affordable units; the same development in Montgomery County would produce roughly 25 to 30 affordable units. Federal action: LIHTC rural set-aside expansion through the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (cross-reference Brief 5.2); federal pre-development grants for counties that adopt IZ.

Publicly owned housing.

Public housing is built and operated by a local Housing Authority. Maryland has 24 Public Housing Authorities and roughly 14,000 public housing units statewide. MD-01 has one public housing community: Somerset Manor in Havre de Grace, run by the Havre de Grace Housing Authority (HDGHA), 60 units. Eight Eastern Shore counties have zero public housing. The 1998 Faircloth Amendment caps net public housing nationally at 1999 levels (cross-reference Brief 5.2), so any expansion requires either Faircloth repeal or use of the HUD Faircloth-to-RAD conversion program. Federal action: cosponsor Faircloth repeal (cross-reference Brief 5.2); fully fund the HUD Capital Fund and Operating Fund; defend HOME and CDBG flexibility for counties that want to capitalize a Local Housing Trust Fund.

Rent stabilization.

Rent stabilization caps the rate of annual rent increases. Maryland does not preempt local rent stabilization. Two Maryland jurisdictions have functioning rent stabilization ordinances: Montgomery County (HOME Act, Bill 15-23, signed July 2023, caps annual increases at the lesser of CPI plus 3 percent or 6 percent, with a 23-year exemption for new construction completed after January 1, 2000) and Prince George's County (Permanent Rent Stabilization and Protection Act of 2024, CB-055-2024, lesser of CPI plus 3 percent or 6 percent for general housing and lesser of 4.5 percent or CPI for senior housing, effective September 2024). No MD-01 county has adopted rent stabilization. A family in Salisbury can face an unlimited rent increase in a renewal cycle; a family in identical circumstances in Bethesda or Bowie cannot. Federal action: there is no direct federal lever, but federal funding through CDBG and HOME can support the tenant-stabilization administrative work counties need to do.

Local housing trust funds.

Counties can create dedicated Local Housing Trust Funds to capitalize public housing development, IZ in-lieu fees, tenant-stabilization work, and emergency assistance. The Maryland Affordable Housing Trust at the state level provides matching funds. Federal HOME and CDBG dollars can flow through. Howard County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the City of Baltimore have established trust funds. Most MD-01 counties have not. Federal action: defend HOME, CDBG, and the Treasury CDFI Fund's housing programs.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

A Salisbury family pays \$1,500 a month in rent under a one-year lease. Their landlord, an out-of-state LLC, raises rent by 28 percent at renewal. The family can pay \$1,920 a month or move. Maryland law allows this rent increase. A family in identical circumstances in Bethesda or Bowie would be protected: their landlord's annual rent increase would be capped at the lesser of CPI plus 3 percent or 6 percent. The Salisbury family pays the full \$420-a-month difference because Wicomico County has not adopted the same rent stabilization ordinance Montgomery and Prince George's County passed. The county has the legal authority; the ordinance has not been written.

Down the street, a 200-unit apartment building is being developed on a vacant lot by the same out-of-state landlord. None of the 200 units will be reserved as affordable, because Wicomico County has not adopted an inclusionary zoning ordinance. The same 200-unit building in Montgomery County would produce 25 to 30 affordable units mandated under MPDU. The state law permitting IZ has been on the books since the 1970s. The Wicomico ordinance has not been written.

The federal government cannot pass either of those county ordinances. What the federal government can do is fund the tools that make adoption easier: HOME and CDBG flexibility for tenant-support offices; HUD pre-development grants for IZ implementation; LIHTC rural set-aside expansion to make affordable construction pencil out on the Eastern Shore; defense of Section 5311 transit money so any new housing is actually reachable from work and school (cross-reference Brief 5.5); and Faircloth Amendment repeal to let HDGHA add to Somerset Manor (cross-reference Brief 5.2).

MY TAKE

A federal representative can do two things on county-level housing policy: convene the people who can adopt the tools, and fund the federal supports that make adoption possible. The four tools work elsewhere in Maryland. The legal authority is on the books. What is missing in MD-01 is a federal partner who treats county housing policy as part of the job.

OUR PLAN

In Congress

On Faircloth and public housing:

- Cosponsor Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation (cross-reference Brief 5.2). The 1998 cap (42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g)) is the single biggest federal block on adding new deeply affordable units. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried a House-passed repeal in 2020.
- Push HUD to expand the Faircloth-to-RAD program, which converts unused Faircloth authority into actual units. HDGHA could use it to add to Somerset Manor.
- Defend the HUD Public Housing Capital Fund and Operating Fund in every appropriations cycle.

On HOME, CDBG, and trust-fund support:

- Defend the federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program and the Community Development Block Grant program at IJJA-era spending levels. Both can flow into Local Housing Trust Funds counties have authority to establish.
- Push for federal pre-development grants for counties capitalizing trust funds for the first time. The capacity barrier is real on the Lower Shore.
- Defend the Treasury CDFI Fund and the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) housing-adjacent provisions (cross-reference Brief 5.4).

On LIHTC and rural construction:

- Cosponsor the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515) (cross-reference Brief 5.2) with explicit rural set-asides and deeper income targeting (30 and 50 percent of AMI rather than letting all units cluster at 60 percent).
- Push USDA Rural Development's Section 515 and Section 538 multifamily loan programs for new affordable construction in MD-01 small towns.

On tenant power:

- Cosponsor federal legislation establishing baseline retaliatory-eviction protections (cross-reference Brief 5.2) so counties recognizing tenant unions are not legally exposed.
- Push HUD to publish guidance recognizing tenant-support offices and tenant unions as eligible recipients of pre-development and capacity grants under existing HUD authority.

In the District

A district office liaison for county-level housing policy, working with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Maryland Affordable Housing Trust, the Harford Community Action Agency (HCAA), the Havre de Grace Housing Authority (HDGHA), Maryland Capital Enterprises, and county housing offices in each MD-01 county. The liaison helps counties navigate federal funding applications when they decide to adopt IZ, recognize tenant unions, capitalize trust funds, or expand public housing.

A standing MD-01 Housing Tools Roundtable. Brings county housing offices, county council members willing to engage, county economic development directors, regional councils (Tri-County Lower Eastern Shore, Mid-Shore Regional Council, Upper Shore Regional Council), Maryland DHCD staff, HCAA, and tenant advocates into one room. The point is technical assistance and peer learning across counties.

A specific outreach to Hunter Baker (Harford County housing researcher; author of "Combating Harford's Housing Crisis," 2026), Maryland Capital Enterprises, the Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition, and the Public Justice Center on a rolling basis as MD-01 counties consider adoption.

Annual public scorecard: which MD-01 counties have adopted which of the four tools. Posted online.

Through Oversight

Public letters to HUD on Faircloth-to-RAD program implementation in MD-01, specifically Somerset Manor capacity expansion.

Public letters to USDA Rural Development on Section 515 and Section 538 multifamily loan flow into MD-01 small towns.

Demand committee hearings on Faircloth Amendment repeal and on LIHTC rural set-aside expansion.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General on enforcement of the state HOME Act source-of-income protections at the county level (cross-reference Brief 5.2).

THE HONEST PART

These are state and local tools. A member of Congress cannot pass a Wicomico County rent stabilization ordinance. What a member of Congress can do is fund the federal supports that make adoption easier (HOME, CDBG, HUD capacity grants, LIHTC expansion, Faircloth repeal), convene county officials and advocates, and use the public platform of the office to make the case that these tools are not radical.

The four tools have different political weights in MD-01. Tenant unions and inclusionary zoning are the most achievable in the near term. Rent stabilization is harder politically because landlord interests organize quickly. Public housing expansion is the heaviest lift because Faircloth has to come down at the federal level first.

The Eastern Shore housing market is structurally different from Hunter Baker's Harford suburban-fringe focus. Smaller rental stock, second-home dynamics in Worcester (Ocean City), severe rural rental scarcity in Crisfield and Cambridge, watermen and farmworker housing pressure that does not fit the suburban model. The four tools translate as a menu, not a recipe. Each county that engages will need a different combination.

The convening role of a member of Congress is real but bounded. It depends on county officials who are willing to engage. Some are. Some are not. The work is showing up consistently and making the federal funding case clearly enough that local elected officials see the upside in adoption.

RECEIPTS

BILLS

- Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation (current 119th Congress vehicle to be confirmed). Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried the 2020 House-passed amendment.
- Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515) — LIHTC expansion with rural set-aside (cross-reference Brief 5.2).
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program reauthorization legislation.
- Tenant union and retaliatory eviction protection legislation (multiple bills across recent Congresses).

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Faircloth Amendment to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-276), codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g).
- HUD Public Housing Capital Fund and Operating Fund.
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program.
- HUD HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
- HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- USDA Rural Development Section 515 (multifamily) and Section 538 (multifamily loan guarantee) programs.
- Treasury CDFI Fund.

MARYLAND AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Maryland Land Use Article § 7-401 — state authority for counties and municipalities to adopt inclusionary zoning.
- Maryland State Government § 20-702 — HOME Act, source-of-income discrimination ban (cross-reference Brief 5.2).
- Maryland Affordable Housing Trust (state-level matching fund for Local Housing Trust Funds).
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

MARYLAND JURISDICTIONS WITH ADOPTED TOOLS (COMPARATORS)

- Inclusionary zoning: Montgomery County (MPDU, 1974), Howard County (MIHU), Baltimore City (Ordinance 24-308, July 2024), Annapolis, Frederick City, Gaithersburg, Rockville, Charles County, Frederick County, Anne Arundel County.
- Rent stabilization: Montgomery County (Bill 15-23, July 2023, lesser of CPI+3% or 6%), Prince George's County (CB-055-2024, September 2024, lesser of CPI+3% or 6%, with a 4.5% / CPI cap on senior housing).
- Local Housing Trust Funds: Montgomery County, Howard County, Prince George's County, City of Baltimore.
- Public housing: 24 Maryland Public Housing Authorities operating ~14,000 units statewide. MD-01: Havre de Grace Housing Authority operating Somerset Manor (60 units).

SOURCES

- Hunter Baker, "Combating Harford's Housing Crisis," Master's Capstone, American Public University System (February 2026)
- Maryland DHCD 2025 Housing Needs Assessment
- Montgomery County DHCA Rent Stabilization

- Prince George's County PRSA
- Howard County Moderate Income Housing Unit (MIHU)
- National Coalition for the Homeless on the Faircloth Amendment
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program
- Common Dreams on the AOC 2020 Faircloth repeal vote
- Md. Code, Land Use § 7-401 (state IZ authority)
- Havre de Grace Housing Authority: hdgha.org

PARTNERS

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Maryland Affordable Housing Trust. Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition. Hunter Baker (Harford housing researcher). Harford Community Action Agency (HCAA). Havre de Grace Housing Authority (HDGHA). Maryland Capital Enterprises. Public Justice Center. Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore. Mid-Shore Regional Council. Upper Shore Regional Council. National Low Income Housing Coalition. Maryland Coalition to End Homelessness. Maryland tenant advocacy organizations.

SOURCES

Theme 5: The Pursuit of Happiness

Sources for every claim made in the briefs of this theme. Bills cite the 119th Congress sponsor and bill number unless otherwise noted; "see *Brief X.Y*" indicates a citation that recurs across briefs and is fully detailed in the named brief.

THEME 05: THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Brief 5.1: Schools That Work

BILLS

- IDEA Full Funding Act (H.R. 2598, Huffman; S. 1277, Van Hollen).
- Expanding Access to School Meals Act of 2025 (H.R. 2680 / S. 1431).
- College for All Act of 2025 (H.R. 3543 / S. 1832).
- PELL Act of 2025 (S. 1683).
- Pay Teachers Act (S. 2481); Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence reauthorization (S. 3433).
- Strengthening HBCU and 1890 land-grant funding legislation.
- Perkins V Career and Technical Education reauthorization.

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, including Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV-A).
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Higher Education Act, including Pell Grant and PSLF provisions.
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins V).

SOURCES

- Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.
- Maryland State Board of Education.
- Maryland Inspector General for Education.
- ACLU of Maryland Somerset County litigation.
- 2023 federal letters on 1890 land-grant HBCU underfunding (USDA / Department of Education).
- Civil Rights Data Collection.

Brief 5.2: Towns Worth Staying In

BILLS

- Federal source-of-income discrimination legislation: Fair Housing Improvement Act (S. 2827 / H.R. 5443); Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act (H.R. 206); Choice in Affordable Housing Act (H.R. 3133); Discrimination Among Housing Voucher Holders Act (S. 934).

- Rental screening reform: Fair Tenant Screening Act (H.R. 4369); Rental Application Fee Reduction Act (H.R. 4100); related provisions in S. 1465.
- Eviction Right to Counsel Act of 2025 (H.R. 4761 / S. 2463).
- Neighborhood Homes Investment Act (H.R. 2854 / S. 1686).
- Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act / LIHTC expansion (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515).
- Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation (current 119th Congress vehicle to be confirmed). Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried the 2020 House-passed amendment.

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES

- Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. § 3601 et seq.).
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- HUD Housing Quality Standards; Healthy Homes Program; Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program.
- Federal Housing Administration (FHA) homeownership programs.
- Faircloth Amendment to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-276), codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g). Caps net public housing at October 1, 1999 levels.
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program (administrative workaround converting unused Faircloth authority into deeply affordable units).

MARYLAND AUTHORITIES

- Maryland HOME Act, Md. State Government § 20-702. Source-of-income discrimination ban (Maryland is one of 23 states with this protection).
- Maryland Mortgage Program (MMP). State-run first-time homebuyer pathway.

SOURCES

- HUD; HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes.
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.
- National Low Income Housing Coalition.
- Maryland Legal Aid.
- Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, Source of Income Guidance (August 2025).
- National Coalition for the Homeless on the Faircloth Amendment (nationalhomeless.org/repeal-faircloth-amendment).
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program documentation (radresource.net).
- Children's HealthWatch on housing instability cost (childrenshealthwatch.org/housing). \$111 billion 10-year cost frame.
- UnitedForALICE, Maryland county reports (unitedforalice.org/county-reports/maryland).
- Hunter Baker, "Combating Harford's Housing Crisis," Master's Capstone, American Public University System (February 2026). Source paper for the ALICE, Faircloth, and Harford voucher waitlist data points.

Brief 5.3: Real Jobs Here, Not Just Anywhere

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.
- Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (manufacturing tax credits).
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grants.
- Opportunity Zone tax benefits (Internal Revenue Code Section 1400Z).

- Registered Apprenticeship under Department of Labor.
- GSA federal cloud contracts; DOD computing requirements.

SOURCES

- Department of Commerce CHIPS implementation.
- Economic Development Administration.
- Department of Labor apprenticeship.
- PJM Interconnection.
- Maryland Department of Commerce.

Brief 5.4: Help for Small and Black-Owned Businesses

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Small Business Administration (SBA) 7(a), 504, microloan programs.
- SBA 8(a) Business Development Program.
- Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).
- State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI).
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund.
- USDA Rural Business Investment Program (RBIC).
- USDA Rural Development.

SOURCES

- SBA.
- Maryland Capital Enterprises.
- Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce.
- Salisbury Wicomico Economic Development.
- Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore.

Brief 5.5: Get Where You're Going

BILLS

- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), Public Law 117-58, signed November 15, 2021. Surface transportation authorization expires September 30, 2026. Total ~\$567B over five years. **Andy Harris voted Nay** (House Roll Call 369, November 5, 2021), the only Maryland House member to do so.
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization (FY2027 onward). To be drafted; the central transportation bill of the next Congress.
- FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024, Public Law 118-63. Five-year authorization through FY2028.
- Federal Marine Highway and Ferry Boat formula reauthorization vehicles (multiple bills across recent Congresses).

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): Federal-Aid Highway Program, Bridge Formula Program, Bridge Investment Program (BIP), Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program, PROTECT resilience program, Safe Streets and Roads for All.
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA): Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities), Section 5311 (Rural Areas), Section 5307 (Urbanized Areas), Section 5337 (State of Good Repair), Section 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities), Capital Investment Grants.
- National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. \$5B over five years.

- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA): Amtrak Northeast Corridor capital, Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail.
- USDOT competitive multimodal grants: RAISE, INFRA, Mega.
- USDOT credit programs: TIFIA, RRIF.
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): Airport Improvement Program (AIP).
- USACE Civil Works (waterways, ports, jetties, harbor maintenance).
- NOAA Marine Highway program.
- Highway Trust Fund (gas tax 18.4¢/gallon, diesel 24.4¢/gallon; not raised since 1993).

MARYLAND AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT): SHA (highways), MTA (transit and MARC), MAA (airports), Port Administration, MVA.
- Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Bay Bridge, Hatem Bridge, Tydings Bridge, Key Bridge replacement, BWI tolls.
- Maryland Transit Administration: MARC Penn Line, locally-operated transit systems oversight.
- Locally-operated transit systems (LOTS): Shore Transit, Delmarva Community Transit, Cecil Transit, Harford Transit Link.

SOURCES

- House Clerk roll call records (clerk.house.gov/Votes).
- Bay Crossing Study (baycrossingstudy.com).
- Maryland Transportation Authority (mdta.maryland.gov).
- Maryland NEVI Plan (evplan.mdot.maryland.gov/nevi-program).
- MTA Locally Operated Transit Systems (mta.maryland.gov/lots).
- Aberdeen Proving Ground compatibility plan (militarycompatibility.maryland.gov).
- CRS Report R47573, Highway Trust Fund (congress.gov).
- CRS Report R48845, Surface Transportation Reauthorization (congress.gov).
- Transportation for America, FY26 THUD analysis (t4america.org, January 2026).
- Engineering News-Record, "Maryland Advances Bay Bridge Replacement Plan" (enr.com).
- Capital News Service Maryland, on Maryland's IJA share (November 9, 2021).
- Common Sense Eastern Shore, on Harris IJA credit-claiming (commonsenseeasternshore.org).
- Office of Andy Harris, press release opposing Bay Bridge toll hikes (harris.house.gov).
- SBYbiz on the Wicomico FY26 AIP grant for Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport (sbybiz.org).
- Bay Journal on Hooper's Island sea-level coverage (bayjournal.com).

Brief 5.6: Houses People Can Live In

BILLS

- Faircloth Amendment repeal legislation (current 119th Congress vehicle to be confirmed). Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez carried the 2020 House-passed amendment (see Brief 5.2).
- Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (H.R. 2725 / S. 1515). LIHTC expansion with rural set-aside (see Brief 5.2).
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program reauthorization legislation.
- Tenant union and retaliatory eviction protection legislation (multiple bills across recent Congresses).

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Faircloth Amendment to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-276), codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1437g(g).
- HUD Public Housing Capital Fund and Operating Fund.
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program.

- HUD HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
- HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- USDA Rural Development Section 515 (multifamily) and Section 538 (multifamily loan guarantee) programs.
- Treasury CDFI Fund.

MARYLAND AUTHORITIES AND PROGRAMS

- Maryland Land Use Article § 7-401. State authority for counties and municipalities to adopt inclusionary zoning.
- Maryland State Government § 20-702. HOME Act, source-of-income discrimination ban (see Brief 5.2).
- Maryland Affordable Housing Trust. State-level matching fund for Local Housing Trust Funds.
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

MARYLAND COMPARATOR JURISDICTIONS

- Inclusionary zoning: Montgomery County (MPDU, 1974), Howard County (MIHU), Baltimore City (Ordinance 24-308, July 2024), Annapolis, Frederick City, Gaithersburg, Rockville, Charles County, Frederick County, Anne Arundel County.
- Rent stabilization: Montgomery County (Bill 15-23, July 2023, lesser of CPI+3% or 6%), Prince George's County (CB-055-2024, September 2024, lesser of CPI+3% or 6%, with 4.5% / CPI cap on senior housing).
- Local Housing Trust Funds: Montgomery County, Howard County, Prince George's County, City of Baltimore.
- Public housing: 24 Maryland Public Housing Authorities operating ~14,000 units statewide. MD-01: Havre de Grace Housing Authority operating Somerset Manor (60 units).

SOURCES

- Hunter Baker, "Combating Harford's Housing Crisis," Master's Capstone, American Public University System (February 2026). Source paper for the comparative policy analysis and the four-tool framework.
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, 2025 Housing Needs Assessment (dhcd.maryland.gov).
- Montgomery County DHCA Rent Stabilization (montgomerycountymd.gov).
- Prince George's County, Permanent Rent Stabilization and Protection Act (princegeorgescountymd.gov).
- Howard County Moderate Income Housing Unit / MIHU (howardcountymd.gov).
- National Coalition for the Homeless on the Faircloth Amendment (nationalhomeless.org).
- HUD Faircloth-to-RAD program documentation (radresource.net).
- Common Dreams on the AOC 2020 Faircloth repeal vote (commondreams.org, July 2020).
- Md. Code, Land Use § 7-401, state IZ authority (law.justia.com).
- Havre de Grace Housing Authority (hdgha.org).

WANT MORE

Read the full plan.

This is one of five themes from **The New Plan**, Randi White's plan for MD-01. Read all 27 briefs, every citation, and the full pay-for plan in one place.

READ EVERYTHING AT

randiformd.com/plan

Or write me. The plan is a working document and I read what comes in.
info@randiformd.com