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Howard County Association of REALTORS®
To: Council Chair Walsh and Honorable Members of the County Council
Date: July 2, 2025
RE: Amendments to CB24-2025

Good evening, Chairperson Walsh and Members of the Howard County Council,

On behalf of the Howard County Association of REALTORS®, I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed amendments to **Howard County CB24-2025** – particularly those that mandate electrification in both residential and commercial construction – as well as the introduction of substantive amendments after the close of the public comment period.

While sustainability and energy efficiency are worthwhile goals, the current package of amendments—particularly Amendments No. 4, 5, 6, and 7—represents a sweeping shift in building policy that could have serious unintended consequences for housing affordability, design flexibility, and project feasibility.

The proposed electric-ready and electrification mandates, combined with stricter energy efficiency thresholds, place an undue burden on homebuilders, developers, and property owners—especially smaller builders and those focused on affordable housing. These provisions may drive up construction and renovation costs, constrain design choices, and complicate timelines. In many cases, the market demand for full electrification is still evolving, and these mandates may outpace consumer preferences and technological readiness.

Furthermore, while climate action is a shared responsibility, successful policy implementation requires robust community engagement and input from all stakeholders. Unfortunately, many in the real estate and building sectors, as well as members of the general public, remain unaware of the full scope and implications of these amendments. Rushing through such transformative policy without broad and inclusive dialogue risks creating long-term affordability issues and diminishing public trust.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Council to:

1. **Remove any and all language mandating electrification** from CB24-2025, including electric-ready requirements for residential and commercial buildings.
2. **Pause final action on electrification mandates** until additional public outreach and stakeholder engagement can occur, particularly with builders, REALTORS®, and homeowners who will be directly affected.



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- 3. Consider implementation of incentives and voluntary pathways** for achieving sustainability goals, rather than costly mandates that may disproportionately impact working families and small developers.

Howard County can and should be a leader in sustainable development—but that leadership must be achieved through inclusive, balanced, and practical policymaking that considers both long-term environmental goals and near-term economic realities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I welcome the opportunity for further dialogue and look forward to your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Cory Flere, ABR, GRI, AHWD, MRP, C2EX
Chair, Legislative Committee
Director, Board of Directors
Howard County Association of REALTORS®