



COMMISSION ON AGING

February 26, 2019

The Honorable Nancy J. King, Chair
Senate Committee on Budget and Taxation
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Nancy.king@senate.state.md.us

Re: SB 654--Property Tax Credit- Elderly Individuals

I am writing to express the Montgomery County Commission on Aging's strong support for SB 654, which would assist older adult homeowners in Maryland by reducing the number of years an individual must have owned his or her home in order to claim local senior homeowner property tax credits – thereby easing the tax burden faced by many of our older residents.

Under current Maryland law, to be eligible for the senior homeowner property tax credit made available by local governments, a homeowner must be age 65 or older and have owned the home in question for the preceding 40 years. SB 654 would reduce the required term of ownership to 25 years. Other provisions of the current statute remain the same: the property tax credit may not exceed 20% of the county or municipal property tax imposed on the property; and the credit may be granted for up to five years. The bill would take effect June 1, 2019 and would apply to taxable years beginning after June 30, 2019. Local governments may establish (1) the maximum assessed value of a dwelling that is eligible for the tax credit; (2) additional eligibility criteria for the tax credit; (3) regulations and procedures for the application and processing of requests for the tax credit; and (4) any other provisions necessary to carry out the tax credit program.

The Montgomery County Commission on Aging was established in 1974 to advise County government on the needs, interests, and issues of older adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf. We continue to prioritize the need for more affordable housing options for older adults and for increased opportunities to allow older adults to live safely in their communities. Property tax credits are one way that counties can make continued homeownership more affordable for older residents. Lowering the number of years of homeownership required for this particular credit will allow more older adults to avail themselves of the program and to remain in their homes, continuing to contribute to and enjoy the community where they have spent decades of their lives.

Thank you for your consideration of the Commission on Aging's support for this bill.

Sincerely yours,

Jean M. Dinwiddie, Chair

Department of Health and Human Services

401 Hungerford Drive, 4th Floor, Rockville, Maryland, 20850 240-777-1120, FAX 240-777-1436

www.montgomerycounty.md.gov/hhs

cc:

Senator Katie Fry Hester
304 James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

MC delegation
Leslie Frey