



ROBERT G. CASSILLY

Harford County Executive

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**Harford County Executive Bob Cassilly Announces Opposition to Legislation Allowing
Freestanding Accessory Dwelling Units in Residential Areas**

BEL AIR, Md., (Jan. 16, 2024) – County Executive Bob Cassilly issued the following statement today opposing Bill 24-001, which would allow freestanding accessory dwelling units in all residential areas of Harford County. The legislation was introduced on January 2 by County Councilman Aaron Penman (District B - Fallston).

“I strongly oppose Bill 24-001, which allows freestanding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in all residential areas. This bill would result in a massive increase in the density of housing in all areas of the county, negatively impacting the quality of life in existing communities, reducing property values, undermining effective zoning, and overcrowding schools.

ADUs are currently allowed in Harford County but must be within or attached to an existing single-family home and occupied by a relative of the homeowner. They are allowed for the purpose of placing aged or disabled family members in a separate suite within the family home.

The intent of Bill 24-001 is to remove all the current restrictions on ADUs. The bill allows for construction of a flood of new, free standing rental houses into existing, well-established neighborhoods without regard for the negative impacts on neighboring properties, communities, or county resources.

These new residences could double existing housing densities as they consume existing lawns with freestanding units occupied by renters with no family ties to the primary residence, leading to potential noise disturbances and reduced privacy for area residents.


The bill makes responsible planning nearly impossible. Schools, water & sewer services, electric utilities, and other systems would be strained by an influx of unplanned residences. In areas with on-street parking, existing homeowners would compete with ADU residents for limited spots. Roads could become less passable for residents, emergency vehicles, and snowplows.

Potential overcrowding decreases the desirability of neighborhoods, leading to a decline in home values. ADUs rented out for short periods would likely attract residents with no connection to the community.

Harford County would be ill-served by Bill 24-001 and I urge council members to reject this ill-conceived legislation.”

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