



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Senator Clarence K. Lam, Senate Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
420 Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Courtney Watson, House Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
216 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT:** Ho. Co. Legislative Bond Initiative: East Columbia 50+ Center

Dear Chair Lam, Chair Watson and Delegation Members,

I am proud to express my support for this project, which would establish funding to renovate space vacated by the East Columbia 50+ Center to serve as a Multi-Service Center.

Thanks to the partnership and support of the Howard County Delegation, we were able to advance the East Columbia 50+ Center expansion in my fiscal 2022 Capital Budget. The expanded Center will help Howard County's older adult residents, especially the 40 percent of the County older adult population that live in East Columbia. Relocating the expanded Center on the existing East Columbia Library campus presents an opportunity to develop the vacant space into a multi-service center to meet the needs of our community, enabling our residents to connect, learn and thrive.

If approved, the \$250,000 bond bill initiative will provide programmatic space for the Department of Community Resources and Services' Office of the Local Children's Board and Office of Children and Families. Some of the proposed programs that can be implemented in the multi-service center include: supporting youth development programs at the Title I Cradlerock Elementary School and Lake Elkhorn Middle School; building capacity of community partners and local leadership teams; and assisting families with applications, referrals, and appointments to secure community-based services.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently named Howard County a winner of the prestigious 2021 Culture of Health Prize for our community's commitment to advancing health, equity, and opportunity for all. The multi-service center can strengthen this commitment by connecting our residents with the resources they need. I urge your support for this project so that a currently vacant space can become an important hub for community growth and wellness.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive