

# HOUSE BILL 691

P3, C9

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By: **Delegates Lopez, Kaufman, Spiegel, and Wims**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2                   **State Government – Procedures – Permitting Efficiency for Housing**  
3                   **Development Projects**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain units in the Executive Branch of State government  
5       to adopt procedures to streamline certain permitting processes for housing  
6       development projects; requiring the State Housing Ombudsman to ensure  
7       consistency between certain permitting processes developed by different units;  
8       authorizing the delegation of certain tasks related to the review or approval of  
9       permits related to housing construction to certain local governmental units; and  
10      generally relating to permitting efficiency for housing development projects.

11 BY renumbering

12       Article – State Government

13       Section 10–1701 and 10–1702 and the subtitle “Subtitle 17. Miscellaneous”  
14       to be Section 10–1801 and 10–1802, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 18.  
15       Miscellaneous”

16       Annotated Code of Maryland

17       (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to

19       Article – State Government

20       Section 10–1701 through 10–1703 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 17.  
21       Permitting Efficiency for Housing Development Projects”

22       Annotated Code of Maryland

23       (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

24                   SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

25       That Section(s) 10–1701 and 10–1702 and the subtitle “Subtitle 17. Miscellaneous” of  
26       Article – State Government of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be  
27       Section(s) 10–1801 and 10–1802, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 18. Miscellaneous”.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read  
2 as follows:

3 **Article – State Government**

4 **SUBTITLE 17. PERMITTING EFFICIENCY FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**

5 **10–1701.**

6 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
7 INDICATED.

8 (B) “HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT” MEANS THE NEW CONSTRUCTION  
9 OR SUBSTANTIAL RENOVATION OF A RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE PROJECT.

10 (C) (1) “PERMIT RELATED TO HOUSING CONSTRUCTION” MEANS A  
11 PERMIT OR AN APPROVAL REQUIRED BY LAW OR REGULATION TO BE ISSUED BY A  
12 UNIT IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT TO A DEVELOPER,  
13 CONTRACTOR, OR SUBCONTRACTOR IN ORDER TO COMMENCE, CONTINUE, OR  
14 SUPPORT A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

15 (2) “PERMIT RELATED TO HOUSING CONSTRUCTION” INCLUDES A  
16 PERMIT OR AN APPROVAL RELATED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION OF  
17 SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE SERVING A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

18 (D) “STATE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN” MEANS THE INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED  
19 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO  
20 FACILITATE NAVIGATION THROUGH LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL PERMITTING  
21 PROCESSES.

22 **10–1702.**

23 (A) EACH UNIT IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT THAT  
24 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ISSUING A PERMIT RELATED TO HOUSING CONSTRUCTION  
25 SHALL ADOPT PROCEDURES TO STREAMLINE THE PERMITTING PROCESS IN  
26 ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION.

27 (B) A STREAMLINED PERMITTING PROCESS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SECTION  
28 SHALL, AT A MINIMUM:

29 (1) TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE, ALLOW FOR THE CONCURRENT FILING  
30 AND ADJUDICATION OF MULTIPLE PERMITS OR APPROVALS RELATED TO A  
31 PARTICULAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT;

1                   **(2) IN CASES IN WHICH CONCURRENT FILING AND ADJUDICATION IS**  
2   NOT FEASIBLE, PROVIDE FOR THE PREDICTABLE SEQUENCING OF FILINGS AND  
3   ADJUDICATIONS; AND

4                   **(3) ESTABLISH A FRAMEWORK THAT ALLOWS FOR THE EXPEDITED**  
5   REVIEW OF PERMITS RELATED TO HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, INCLUDING CLEAR  
6   ESCALATION AND PRIORITIZATION PATHWAYS.

7                   **(C) IN DEVELOPING A STREAMLINED PERMITTING PROCESS UNDER THIS**  
8   SECTION, A UNIT SHALL CONSULT WITH:

9                   **(1) THE UNIT'S PERMITTING OPERATIONS STAFF;**

10                  **(2) RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING ENTITIES THAT**  
11   FREQUENTLY APPLY FOR PERMITS; AND

12                  **(3) THE STATE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN.**

13                  **(D) TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE, THE STATE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SHALL**  
14   ENSURE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE STREAMLINED PERMITTING PROCESSES  
15   DEVELOPED BY DIFFERENT UNITS UNDER THIS SECTION.

16   **10-1703.**

17                  NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A UNIT IN THE  
18   EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT MAY, BY AGREEMENT WITH A COUNTY  
19   OR MUNICIPALITY, DELEGATE TO AN APPROPRIATE LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNIT  
20   ANY TASK RELATED TO THE REVIEW OR APPROVAL OF PERMITS RELATED TO  
21   HOUSING CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY.

22                  SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That on or before December 1,  
23   2027, the State Housing Ombudsman within the Department of Housing and Community  
24   Development shall report to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the  
25   Environment and the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, in accordance  
26   with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the development and implementation of  
27   the streamlined permitting processes required by this Act.

28                  SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
29   October 1, 2026.