

Submitter: Melissa Doukas
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4035
To: Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and Members of the House Committee on Housing

1. Current acreage caps force trade offs between unit count and community infrastructure. When parcels are too small, developers are compelled to maximize buildable lots simply to meet pro forma thresholds, which often eliminates space for parks, stormwater wetlands, or multi use open areas that give neighborhoods identity and long term value. Why this matters: HB 4035's increase in acreage limits gives us the planning flexibility to stop choosing between a housing unit and a park. With thoughtful site planning, larger projects can deliver both housing supply and meaningful public open space.
2. Community amenities (e.g., playgrounds, childcare, on site maintenance for common spaces) need a sustainable user base. Small, scattered developments often cannot support these features economically, leaving residents with limited services. Why this matters: Larger, well designed developments create the "rooftop count" that keeps amenities financially viable without relying on special assessments that burden a few owners. Balancing property owners and affordable housing:
3. The market increasingly favors short trips and walkable access to daily needs. Buyers and renters, from young professionals to older adults, prefer neighborhoods where coffee, day care, parks, and transit connections are within a short walk. Why this matters: HB 4035's flexibility on parcel size and allowable uses lets planners integrate small scale commercial and a range of housing types, including townhomes, triplexes, and other "missing middle" options, so daily needs are met within the neighborhood.

Current acreage caps force developers to choose unit counts over parks, playgrounds, and other essential infrastructure, but HB 4035's increase in acreage limits restores the planning flexibility to deliver both housing supply and meaningful, financially sustainable community amenities. Support HB 4035 to enable walkable, mixed use neighborhoods, including missing middle and affordable units, that protect property owner investments, lower long term costs, and improve livability and equity for all residents