

HCCA Testimony for CB75-2016 and Suggested Amendments

CB 75-2016 HB898 ADOPTION IN HOCO

GOOD EVENING DR. BALL AND MEMBERS OF THE HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

THE HOWARD COUNTY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION IS FOR CB75 AND WE WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST SOME AMENDMENTS.

1. THERE IS A POTENTIAL FOR SOME CONFLICT WITH OTHER OLDER ADULT CREDITS LIKE CB74. THERE IS A LIVEABLE HOMES TAX CREDIT WHERE ONE CAN MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR HOUSE LIKE A ZERO STEP ENTRY, WIDEN DOORWAYS, ETC. YOU CAN GET A MAXIMUM PROPERTY TAX CREDIT OF \$2500 IF YOU SPEND \$5000. THIS IS THE MAXIMUM CREDIT IN ANY GIVEN YEAR. WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT SOMEONE GETS BOTH THE 20% PROPOSED IN CB75 AS WELL AS THE \$2500.

THE 20% CREDIT CAN BE FIGURED TWO WAYS WHEN COMBINED WITH THE LIVEABLE HOMES CREDIT. WE RECCOMEND THAT THE 20% SHOULD BE FIGURED FIRST ON THE PROPERTY TAX AND THEN THE \$2500 MAXIMUM. AN EXAMPLE, 20% OF A \$4000 PROPERTY TAX EQUALS \$800 PLUS \$2500 IF THE LIVEABLE HOMES CREDIT MAXIMUM IS TAKEN SECOND. OWNER WOULD OWE \$700. WHAT WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE IS THE \$2500 DEDUCTED FIRST AND THE 20% TAKEN ON THE REMAINING \$1500 OR \$300. OWNER WOULD OWE \$1200. THIS PRECEDANCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN THE LEGISLATION.

2. PAGE 1, LINE 24 STATES "IF THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY AN INDIVIDUAL". PROPERTY IS TITLED IN VARIOUS WAYS INCLUDING REVOCABLE TRUSTS. TRUSTS SHOULD BE ELIGIBLE WHERE AN INDIVIDUAL CONTROLS THE PROPERTY THRU A TRUST.
3. RETIRED VETERANS COULD IMMEDIATLY RECEIVE THE 20% CREDIT. PAGE 1 LINE 28 SHOULD HAVE THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT AFTER "UNITED STATES", " AND HAS LIVED IN THE SAME DWELLING FOR AT LEAST THE PRECEDING 10 YEARS"
4. THE DEFINITION OF ARMED FORCES DOES NOT INCLUDE THE NATIONAL GUARD. THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS BEEN CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY IN MANY WARS. HB898 DOES NOT INCLUDE A DEFINITION FOR ARMED FORCES SO IT APPEARS THAT THE NATIONAL GUARD VETERANS COULD BE ELIGIBLE. WE SUGGEST ON PAGE 1, LINE 14 AN AMENDMENT AFTER "COAST GUARD" "MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD WHO HAVE SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY".
5. PAGE 2 , LINE 1 STATES THAT 'THE CREDIT MAY BE GRANTED FOR A PERIOD OF UP TO FIVE YEARS". THIS IS PERMISSIVE LANGUAGE FROM HB898 THAT IS DECIDED BY COUNTY LEGISLATION. THE "MAY" SHOULD BE CHANGED TO "SHALL" OTHERWISE IT WILL BE UP TO THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO DECIDE THE PERIOD BY EXECUTIVE ORDER.

I WOULD BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THSE SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS.