

CCHD Spotlight: PATH

Three Steps Forward

By Joe DaPonte

People Acting Together in Howard (PATH) is an organization of community members working to address several issues in their community. With 2024 coming to a close, we would like to highlight some of their accomplishments this past year.

PATH has been hard at work in the Maryland legislature to pass three key bills that will better the lives of renters and homeowners in the local community. After a total of 468 people working together to send 312 emails to legislators, and holding 51 meetings with these legislators, the members of PATH were able to pass three major bills aimed at bettering the lives of Maryland residents.

The first bill passed was the EmPOWER Reform Act. This bill will help fund upgrades to electrical infrastructure, some of which will go towards multi-family homes. Not only will this help to lower emissions, but it will also help make the current energy infrastructure more efficient.

The next bill that PATH helped pass was the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act. This act will aid in the creation of new affordable housing options for people by allowing new affordable housing to be built near public transit. This will not only allow for more housing options, but also more commuting options for residents of these new buildings. Far too often, affordable housing is located far away from public transit. This means that many people must live far from work and have no reliable way to get where they need to go. By building more affordable housing near public transit, the people who need that transit the most will finally be able to use it.

Finally, the Renters Rights & Housing Sustainability Act was passed. This will help everyday renters in Maryland by increasing fees related to filing for evictions, limiting the amount of money a landlord can charge for a deposit, and protecting people from being evicted in extreme weather. Under this bill, landlords can no longer ask for two- or three-months' worth of rent in the form of a security deposit. Landlords can no longer evict people during a blizzard, below freezing temperatures, during tropical storms, or other such times. Landlords can also no longer require reimbursement for eviction costs. This bill will go a long way to protecting the dignity and wellbeing of renters in Maryland.

However, that's not all! PATH worked on two other projects in the 2024 legislative session. To read more about these projects or to learn more about the acts mentioned above, take a look at PATH's [legislative report here](#).