

**Subject:** Testimony In Opposition To Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 22, 2021 6:57:14 PM

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## **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO ATTAINABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES INITIATIVE**

**My name is Hessie Harris. I live in Silver Spring. I am testifying against the so-called Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative.**

**I fully agree with County Executive Mark Elrich that this proposal undertakes too much and is out of synch with undefined, undeveloped and consistently shifting terminology, confusing citizens and obscuring the true nature of what is being proposed.**

**First, there is zoning. The goal to eliminate Single Family Homes (SFH) is reflective of the current notion that historic wrongs must continue to be atoned for whether or not they still exist.**

**The discrimination and resulting segregation associated with SFH was outlawed in the last century. Economic disparity, in and of itself, does not connote or denote discrimination. Intended or not, the Initiative provides a basis for social engineering as well as the destruction of the lives and property of people who are not culpable for things that occurred before they, and possibly, their parents were born.**

**Second, the strategies proposed are based on aspirations and projections not facts. For example, the implementation of housing goals must be preceded by economic investment, job development, and knowledge of where the jobs will be located for those aspirations to be attainable. To paraphrase, there is no guarantee that if you build it they will come.**

**Third, but by no means last, what is passing for civic engagement over these proposals is staged, cursory overview of the conclusions already reached by the Planning Board, followed by asking the audience if they have questions. It doesn't matter how many community outreach sessions the Planning Board holds. If they do not listen to citizens and adapt their proposals accordingly, then these sessions are insufficient cosmetic exercises.**

