
Written Testimony – SUPPORT CB11 2026

From Juliet Gomez <JGomez@cfhoco.org>
Date Fri 2/13/2026 1:58 PM
To CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>

 1 attachment (809 KB)
Written Testimony - SUPPORT of CB11-2026.pdf;

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Dear Chair and Members of the Howard County Council,

On behalf of Melissa Curtin, President & CEO of Community Foundation of Howard County, attached is a written testimony in **SUPPORT of Council Bill CB11-2026**.

This bill represents a meaningful step toward improving the quality of life for everyone in our county. Passing CB11-2026 will help ensure that Howard County continues to advance values such as equity, sustainability, efficiency, transparency, and safety.

Thank you for your leadership.



Juliet Gomez
Executive Assistant



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6680 Martin Rd., Columbia, MD 21044

Sincerely,

This Valentine's Day, honor someone you love with a gift to CFHC's Local Giving, Better Living Fund that supports community grantmaking for Howard County nonprofits -

[<http://This%20Valentine's%20Day,%20honor%20someone%20you%20love%20with%20a%20gift%20to%20CFHC's%20Local%20Giving,%20Better%20Living%20Fund%20that%20supports%20community%20grantmaking%20for%20Howard%20County%20nonprofits%20-%20because%20when%20we%20give%20locally,%20we%20all%20benefit!%20https://cfhoco.fcsuite.com/erp/donate>] **because when we give locally, we all benefit!**



TESTIMONY OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

County Council of Howard County, Maryland
Tuesday, February 18, 2026

RE: Multi-Year Grant Agreement between Howard County and the Howard County Housing Commission for the NonProfit Collaborative

Position: SUPPORT of CB11-2026

Council President and Members of the County Council:

The Community Foundation of Howard County respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of the Multi-Year Grant Agreement between Howard County and the Howard County Housing Commission for the NonProfit Collaborative (NPC).

The NonProfit Collaborative represents an innovative and highly effective model for strengthening our county's nonprofit sector while maximizing the impact of public investment. By providing affordable office space, shared resources, and collaborative opportunities for nonprofit organizations, the NPC has become an essential infrastructure asset for Howard County's social service ecosystem.

The results speak for themselves. The NPC currently houses 13 nonprofit tenant organizations that collectively served 15,327 community members in their most recent fiscal year. These organizations provide critical services addressing homelessness, autism support, workforce development, food security, conflict resolution, and many other vital community needs. Without the cost savings and collaborative environment that the NPC provides, many of these organizations would struggle to maintain their current service levels.

The financial impact is particularly noteworthy. By offering subsidized rent and shared management expenses, the NPC enables nonprofits to redirect scarce resources toward programmatic work rather than overhead. Multiple tenant organizations have reported hiring additional staff, creating new programs, and serving more clients as a direct result of cost savings achieved through the NPC. In an environment where nonprofits face constant pressure to minimize administrative costs, this shared-space model represents smart, efficient use of public resources.

Beyond the financial benefits, the NPC fosters a culture of collaboration that strengthens the entire nonprofit sector. Survey results show that 100% of tenants have built or strengthened relationships with other NPC organizations, and 82% have gained knowledge or ideas from fellow tenants that have helped their work. This cross-pollination of expertise and resources creates a multiplier effect, enhancing the non-profit community's capacity to serve Howard County residents effectively.

The NPC also serves as a community hub, providing meeting space for an additional 17 non-tenant nonprofits, which held 76 meetings in the shared spaces over the past year. This accessibility supports smaller organizations that lack their own facilities and creates opportunities for coordination among service providers working on related issues.

Looking forward, the demonstrated success and growing demand for NPC space, with six current tenants needing expansion and at least eleven organizations on a waiting list, clearly indicate that this investment is meeting a critical need in our community. The NPC is exploring innovative approaches to expansion, including creating job-training opportunities for people with disabilities through a coffee/snack service, further demonstrating the creative, community-centered thinking that characterizes this initiative.

Investing in the NonProfit Collaborative supports the infrastructure that serves our community's most vulnerable residents. The organizations housed at the NPC form a crucial safety net, providing services that prevent homelessness, support individuals with disabilities, address food insecurity, and create pathways to economic stability. By approving this Multi-Year Grant Agreement, the County Council will ensure the continued operation and growth of this vital resource.

We urge the County Council to approve this agreement and to continue supporting this exemplary model of public-nonprofit partnership.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Curtin
President & CEO
Community Foundation of Howard County

MC/jg

CB11-2026: HCCA Testimony

From Ryan Powers <rpowerz115@gmail.com>
Date Tue 2/17/2026 8:05 PM
To CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>

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HCCA CB11-2026 Favorable.pdf;

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Dear Council Members,

Attached and below is testimony for CB11-2026.

Thank you,

Ryan Powers

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Good Evening Council Members,

My name is Ryan Powers from Glenwood. I am testifying on behalf of the Howard County Citizens Association in support of CB11-2026.

We ask that the Council approve CB11-2026. However, as taxpayers investing \$4.6 million over ten years we believe that Howard County should include additional accountability measures to reinforce good governance and transparency. For example, the multiyear agreement should include a "Fair and Open Competition Agreement" that requires the grantee to 1) Meet common standards for publicly advertising an open tenant position and 2) Publicly post criteria explaining why and how nonprofit organizations are selected.

Through discussion with Collaborative manager Cheri Auger we understand tenant selection is open to most nonprofits in good standing. We think Howard County government should formally commit to working with the Collaborative to publicize the availability of subsidized rental space widely and in a manner consistent with fairness to all organizations that might qualify. The Nonprofit Collaborative does a good job of advertising available space with its newsletter and by word of mouth, but this may leave smaller or newer nonprofits unaware of its existence or benefits.

It is clear that people at the Nonprofit Collaborative are open and passionate about what they do. In addition to 13 tenants, the Collaborative has conference rooms to rent for a reasonable price and 19 mailboxes. Since a business address is a barrier to many nonprofits, we think the Council should consider stipulating that the Nonprofit Collaborative expand the number of mailboxes to serve more nonprofits.

CB11-2026 allows HCCA to specifically testify in favor of the Nonprofit Collaborative expansion, but part of our mission is also good governance and transparency as a foundational principle. We believe that all grants like this should be widely advertised in a way that describes the criteria and scoring rubric. Formalizing this in writing creates a pathway forward for qualified organizations to apply.

Thank you,

Ryan Powers, HCCA Board member #####

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Thank you,

Ryan Powers, HCCA Board member

CB-11 testimony

From Sue Geckle <sgeckle@gmail.com>

Date Tue 2/17/2026 2:34 PM

To CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>

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CB11-2026.docx;

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Good afternoon,

Attached is a copy of my testimony in favor of CB11 to be given tonight, February 17.

Kind regards,
Sue Geckle
President
HopeWorks BOD.