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Homeless Persons
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Interfaith Works
Jewish Community Relations Council
of Greater Washington
Job Opportunities Task Force
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Maryland Budget & Tax Policy Institute
Maryland CASH Campaign
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Maryland Community Action Partnership
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Maryland Hunger Solutions
Maryland Interfaith
Legislative Committee
National Council on Alcoholism & Drug
Dependence – Maryland Chapter
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul Society
United Way of Central Maryland
Welfare Advocates

Maryland Alliance for the Poor

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STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 243 HOUSING – DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SOURCE OF INCOME - PROHIBITIONS

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,
Wednesday, February 24, 2010**

Submitted by Branden McLeod, Chair

The Maryland Alliance for the Poor (MAP) is a statewide coalition of advocacy organizations, service providers, and faith communities working together to advocate on behalf of Marylanders living in or near poverty. We come to you today to urge your support for Senate Bill 243, which would prohibit landlords from discriminating against potential renters based on the source of their income. MAP supports SB 243 because it:

- **Ensures the survival of families and individuals:** The bill would keep homelessness at bay for those receiving rental assistance and help to make housing in safe, decent neighborhoods a reality for them.
- **Upholds the dignity of low-income Marylanders:** SB 243 ensures that everyone's money is "good enough," regardless of its source.
- **Helps low-income Marylanders achieve their full potential:** Without the worry of where their families will sleep at night, people moving out of poverty can concentrate on getting and keeping good jobs, managing their money to make it stretch further, and providing care for their children that will lead them to a better future.

Safe, decent, affordable housing is scarce in today's market. Waiting lists for rental assistance can keep it out of reach for years. Discrimination based on source of income prolongs instability and the risk of homelessness even for people who finally have access to adequate resources.

MAP supports SB 243 because it ensures that available housing assistance is actually effective housing assistance. We urge a favorable report for the bill. Thank you for your consideration.