



March 20, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

We appreciate the strong actions that you are taking in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a challenging time for our country and state.

While the repercussions of the pandemic are still unclear on Marylander's health, financial security and our economy, we believe it is critical that the State take steps to recognize the essential services that state and local government provide the real estate industry. These services encompass title searches, access to courts for judgments and lien copies, permitting, inspections, and the transfer and recordation of real property. Denying these services will impact families that need to sell their property in order to proceed with a purchase of another property, homeowners in the midst of a renovation, seniors waiting to move into their new senior living facility, renters waiting to move into new and existing apartments, and the many individuals whose jobs are dependent on the renovation or opening up of new offices.

Most of the work that these essential government services support can continue safely in today's environment. The work does not require large numbers of people who are cloistered close together in offices. Moreover, their work provides essential shelter to Maryland residents, supports the Maryland economy, and is a key source of state and local government revenue.

In addition, providers of real estate services should be considered "essential personnel." Individuals providing real estate services, including agents, title, attorneys, mortgage providers, builders, contractors and projects managers. For multi-unit apartment facilities, property management, building engineers, HVAC, plumbing, electricians, elevator techs and security personnel are "essential personnel" who ensure the safety of residents. Management teams for commercial buildings also ensure the safety and security of these buildings.

Important real estate services are already being impacted by reduced court services and limited services for inspections and permitting. We know that some impact is unavoidable. However, we believe government must carefully balance strong actions to protect against COVID-19 with allowing low risk industries to provide shelter and prop up the economy. We encourage you and the other leaders of our



State to balance the provision of important government services -- in even a reduced capacity -- with protecting Marylanders from as much harm as possible. We offer our assistance in helping find this difficult balance because we believe it is necessary for our State and its citizens.

Sincerely,

John Harrison, President  
Maryland REALTORS®

Tom Ballentine, VP for Policy  
NAIOP, Maryland

Lori Graf, C.E.O  
MBIA

Robert Shovan, President  
BOMA, Baltimore

Mark W. Schweitzer, President  
MLTA

CC Senate President Bill Ferguson  
Speaker Adrienne Jones