



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT**: HB 204: Maryland Aviation Commission – Duties, Composition, and Member Orientation

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee,

I commend Delegate Hill and her co-sponsors for their consistent advocacy and work on this pressing aviation issue which will help bring a balance to aviation policies impacting BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI).

This legislation is needed to address a significant gap in Maryland's transportation and public health policy. Howard County and our volunteer members of the DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable have been working to alleviate the impacts of the NextGen System since March 2017 when the Roundtable was formed. As a former Councilmember, I sponsored local legislation authorizing legal action against the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

In 2019, we filed a second legal petition against the FAA following the approval of the BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport expansion plan; a plan that lacks consideration of the adverse noise impacts to residents in the area. In 2022, Howard and Anne Arundel County engaged a consulting firm to provide us with additional data regarding the level of noise in our communities and how those noise levels may change under revised flight patterns. Also in 2022, a study by researchers at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy examined the health impacts and economic burden of the use of the NextGen System at BWI suggesting that there is "a significant health and economic societal burden associated with aircraft noise" and such public health approaches, like those suggested in HB 204, are "warranted."

As County Executive, I will continue to advocate for thriving and health residents, not only in Howard County but in all impacted jurisdictions.

I welcome your support and urge a favorable report on House Bill 204.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive