

DATE: January 26, 2023

BILL NO.: Senate Bill 77

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

TITLE: Housing and Community Development - Homeowner's Extreme Weather Mitigation and Preparation Grant Program

SPONSORS: Sen. Jackson

Letter of Information

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill 77 would create a Homeowner's Extreme Weather Mitigation and Preparation Grant Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development. This program would provide grants to homeowners, local governments and nonprofits for the purpose of assisting in preparing and repairing residential properties to mitigate water damage caused by extreme weather.

Background and Analysis:

The grant program created by this bill may be a better fit for the mission of the Department of Emergency Management (MDEM), and in fact sounds quite similar to a number of programs MDEM already operates, including:

- the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program,
- Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant,
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program,
- and the Resilient Maryland Revolving Loan Fund.

Conclusion

While our agency has worked closely with the Department of Emergency Management to help communities recover in the aftermath of disasters, our focus is not traditionally hazard-related. In addition, the bulk of our programs are loan programs provided to intermediaries, such as nonprofits, local governments, financial institutions, or businesses, rather than direct individual assistance, as in the case of the homeowner awards from this program. We would defer to the expertise of MDEM in the matter of hazard assistance and recommend their consultation on Senate Bill 77.