



Senate Bill 77

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

MACo Position:

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: January 26, 2023

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

From: Kevin Kinnally and Dominic Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 77 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would, among other provisions, create a grant program aiding homeowners, local governments, and nonprofit organizations in mitigating against water damage caused by extreme weather.

Extreme weather events have become more and more commonplace as climate change has worsened. In Maryland, significant flooding events have resulted in the ruin of numerous homes and businesses. To date, the State of Maryland and its county governments have mostly provided aid after the fact.

SB 77 seeks to harden our communities against the worst impacts of climate change but, as drafted, it excludes a significant cross section of building types that many Marylanders call home. As the housing crisis has become more acute, it is evident that policy makers must do more to preserve existing affordable housing. By excluding housing types that can accommodate a higher level of density, this legislation could inadvertently invest resources too narrowly, leaving vulnerable a major segment of our communities and undermining this bill's noble intent. Counties suggest amending the bill to expand its applicability beyond single-family homes and also specify that multi-unit homes may be eligible for assistance.

If amended and implemented, SB 77 creates an invaluable tool to prevent the damage inflicted by extreme weather, ensuring it is limited and potentially avoided altogether. MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for SB 77.