



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

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**HB 190**

February 7, 2023

**TO:** Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 190– Housing and Community Development - Homeowner's Extreme Weather Mitigation and Preparation Grant Program

**POSITION: Support With Amendment**

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports with amendments** House Bill (HB) 0190.

House Bill 0190 initiates a proactive, climate resilience grant fund dedicated to helping homeowners recover from extreme weather events, namely flooding, providing impacted communities with critical resources to mitigate water damage to homes. The bill considers the inevitability of climate-related impacts on Marylanders, their homes and/or properties and the fact that for many across the state and Baltimore City, it is not a matter of if, but when a climate-related emergency inflicts catastrophic damage.

Though BCA supports this we offer key considerations for amendments, providing justification for amendments references below:

- On page 2, line 10, state “Implement, [PROMOTE, ADVERTISE] and administer the program.”
- Justification: The Bill does not include information on how MD DHCD will advertise this program. An outreach plan to inform residents of the grant program is a must. We highly recommend this be specified in the bill.
- On page 4, line 26, strike \$5,000 and replace with [\$10,000]
- Justification: We recommend increasing the maximum grant amount to up to \$10,000 considering the rising frequency and intensity of extreme weather and flooding events, while maintaining a commitment to allotting at least 1,000 grants in total
- On page 5, after line 4, add new line that includes the following statement:  
[HOMEOWNERS MAY USE A PORTION OF GRANT FUNDS TO COVER NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFPI) PREMIUMS].

- Justification: Including costs for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums provides homeowners with additional resources to cover flood insurance for future financial support.
- On page 2, after line 16, strike Create a list of contractors specializing in extreme 16 weather mitigation and make the list available to grant applicants, replace with [CREATE A LIST OF CONTRACTORS SPECIALIZING IN EXTREME WEATHER MITIGATION, WHO HAVE AGREED TO A FIXED PRICE RANGE FOR WATER MITIGATION SERVICES AND MAKE THE LIST AVAILABLE TO GRANT APPLICANTS]
- Justification: The cost of basic waterproofing services (like sump-pump installation, French drains construction, gutter installation, etc.) should be fixed amongst the pre-approved contractors to avoid price gouging and to maximize the work that can be done under the grant program.
- Where appropriate, add the following language [PROPERTIES WILL BE LIMITED TO A TOTAL OF \$15,000 IN EXTREME WEATHER MITIGATION AND PREPARATION GRANT PROGRAM.]
- Justification: The grant program should limit the number (or funds) that can be used by a structure to mitigate water damage. Not including a limit could mean that the State would be subsidizing structures located in high-risk areas that experience water damage that go beyond the protection provided by basic waterproofing strategies (like waterfront property impacted by frequent tidal flooding and structures located in the floodway). And that could be a drain to the program, as the same set of homeowners would/could be applying every year for the grant.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable with amendment** report on HB190.