



CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

**Support Senate Bill 958 - Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather –
RENEW Act of 2024**
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 20, 2024

The City of Takoma Park supports and urges favorable consideration of this bill, which establishes a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund. This fund will support state and local efforts to adapt to or mitigate the effects of climate change and to address the health impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations. The need for significant additional resources at the state and local levels to make our communities more resilient and to address the impacts of climate change is real, and it is urgent.

The City of Takoma Park is a densely developed, largely residential municipality of almost 18,000 people living within 2.4 square miles in Montgomery County. About half our residents are homeowners and half renters, with a wide range of incomes. In Takoma Park, as across the state, climate change has brought us heavy rains, strong winds, heat waves and storms which are becoming more frequent, more intense, more damaging, and more costly for both residents and for local governments.

Our city is not alone in this. Older stormwater systems can no longer keep up with the heaviest rains, creating dangerous flooding conditions along city and State owned roads and public spaces. Temporary streams now form rapidly on a regular basis, causing road and property damage and creating safety hazards. Overturned trees can have devastating results for roads, businesses, homes and vehicles, and leaving communities without electricity for hours and sometimes days at a time. Our most vulnerable city residents, like residents across the state, also bear the brunt of climate change impacts with health impacts and higher energy cost burdens.

The City, along with the State and other communities statewide, does not have the resources to design and install the additional infrastructure and protections we need to stay safe, or to address damage of this magnitude, or to assist residents, especially lower income residents, to recover from or help prevent such impacts. Despite all our efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change, it is already here, and we need to adapt.

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More resources are needed to address this pressing situation. The funds must come from somewhere, and so the City also supports exploring the concept of a one-time payment by large fossil fuel companies, to raise revenue for this infrastructure.

This bill will help us meet our city, county and state greenhouse gas emissions goals. It also addresses City climate, housing, and equity goals and priorities. Our City climate action framework specifically addresses increased resiliency measures and moving to a fossil fuel free economy, as well as doing our part to reduce greenhouse gasses.

In sum, the City of Takoma Park supports SB 958 and encourages a favorable committee vote.

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