



February 20, 2024

Senate Bill 958

**Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather
(RENEW) Act of 2024**

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 958 – Education, Energy, and the Environment. This Bill establishes the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program and the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund within the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and would provide a source of revenue for State efforts to (1) adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and (2) address the health impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

Costly and often devastating effects of flooding, storms, and extreme heat are already being felt with growing intensity across our region. This is especially true of areas like Annapolis, having experienced the largest increase of nuisance flooding in any U.S. city in nuisance flooding days over the last 50 years. The challenges facing coastal communities like Anne Arundel County are significant and imminent. With more than 500 miles of coastline, what makes the County such a unique and wonderful place is what makes it uniquely vulnerable. Responding to these threats requires substantive policy approaches that have the wellbeing of current and future generations in mind.

That is why our local, city, county, and state elected officials created the Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (Resilience Authority), the first multi-jurisdictional resilience authority in the nation. By creating the Resilience Authority, our goal was not only to accelerate the pace and scale of climate action, but to ensure that we are prepared to compete for substantial public and private funding, taking some of the burden off of local taxpayers while investing in the future of our County. Over the past 12 months our Resilience Authority has secured nearly \$23 million in federal, state, and local funding and are actively pursuing an additional \$52 million to protect city and county shorelines, communities, and residents from climate threats. Funding is slated towards infrastructure projects that will address coastal flooding, beach restoration, shoreline erosion, developing green spaces and supporting the conversion of the county fleet to electric vehicles. Projects are made possible through a combination of sources that include local grants as well as funding from federal, state and private funding.

We are in a historic moment for resilience building efforts. At the same time we are in an era in which the pace, scale and impact of change is greater than anything we have previously confronted. To ensure that the pace of intensifying change does not outstrip our efforts, now is the time to double down and is why we are supportive of this Bill as well as Governor's strategic investments that will allow us to take more ambitious action and show that, if we act now, we can still secure a live able sustainable future for all.

Accordingly, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 958.