



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 5, 2024

Committee: House Environment and Transportation Committee

Bill: HB 1436 - Municipal Incorporation - County Commissioners or County Council - Required Approval of Referendum Request

Position: Support

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 1436, which provides residents a clear pathway to municipal incorporation in certain circumstances.

Municipal incorporation understandably requires several significant procedural steps along the way to forming a new governing body. Part of the process includes establishing an organizing committee, working with the county liaison, holding public meetings, and developing a municipal charter.

But, after all this work, there is no mechanism that would require a county to allow a referendum of the voters to occur. As such, we have only seen 5 successful municipal corporations since 1954, all of which were already special taxing districts and provided no property tax revenue to their respective county.

HB 1436 gives local communities a fighting chance by requiring the county to approve a referendum request at the end of the process if 40% of the area's residents signed the incorporation petition. Registered voters would still have to vote for incorporation via referendum, but they will at least have the opportunity. We believe this is a reasonable and balanced approach which enables Maryland residents to have a say in their manner of representation.

As such, the League respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1436.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Kuhns

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Bill Jorch

Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Director, Public Policy & Research

Deputy Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs