



# City of Frostburg

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*City Administrator*

March 9, 2020

The Honorable Kumar Barve  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
Room 251  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 678

Dear Mr. Barve:

Please accept this correspondence in support of House Bill 678. In recent years, an increasing challenge for the City have been properties that transfer ownership without City taxes or utilities being paid. By requiring the municipalities in Allegany County to provide a "tax-stamp" for any property before the deed is recorded, as is the case in many other Maryland counties, the burden will be rightfully placed on the seller.

Typically, this has occurred with problem properties that have been abandoned, which have unpaid taxes and utilities. The subject properties often have an active code enforcement file for property maintenance violations. Deed transfer is an opportune time for the City to correct these issues and make certain that the accounts are up to date when there is a new owner. Without this enforcement mechanism, the City may not be able to collect its debts and the new owner is faced with unanticipated sums owed to the City.

It is my understanding that this change in law would be implemented at the Allegany County Tax & Utility Office, and that there would be no effect to state resources. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

W. Robert Flanigan  
Mayor