

**MDGA\_SenatorHester\_FAV\_SB822.pdf**

Uploaded by: Fry Hester, Katie

Position: FAV



**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of SB822-Public Safety - Maryland Emergency Management Agency  
- Office of Resilience**

March 4th, 2021

Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Health and Government Operations  
Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 822. Over the past two years, I have had the honor of serving as the Senator representing District 9, which includes Ellicott City. Like many communities in your own district, Ellicott City has been grappling with the issues of climate change and catastrophic flooding - not as some far off and hypothetical danger, but as an all too real aspect of daily life. The experience of my constituents, living through two “thousand-year floods” over the course of two years, is of a magnitude that I hope is not indicative of the direction of our vulnerable communities. But as a coastal state with a great deal of inland tributaries, we as policy makers should be concerned about the implications of climate change and sea level rise on the projected increase in frequency and severity of flooding, and other environmental emergencies threatening Marylanders.

Today, 81,000 Marylanders are at risk of coastal flooding, with 38,000 more individuals projected to also be at risk by 2050. In the same time frame, our state is projected to face up to \$19 billion worth of damage due to sea level rise and flooding. We are capable of preparing for and managing a threat of this magnitude, but doing so will require a great deal of thoughtfulness, coordination, and accountability.

This bill will create the Office of Resilience within the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), responsible for guiding State resilience initiatives; leveraging Federal and Private funding; and building partnerships across the public and private sectors. This Office would also be responsible for:

- Administering Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation grant programs and recovery focused programs;
- Coordinating with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to administer the National Flood Insurance Program;

- Administering state mitigation grants;
- And developing flood risk assessment tools for use by statewide programs and projects.

The resilience office model is comparable to successful efforts in other states. In 2018 the North Carolina legislature established the Office of Recovery and Resiliency in the Department of Public Safety (NCORR) following the devastation of Hurricane Florence. NCORR is responsible for administering funds received by the state through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery Program (CDBG-DR) and coordinates the State Disaster Recovery Task Force. NCORR partners with local government, state agencies and community organizations to improve resilience in social and financial systems, infrastructure, ecosystems and natural habitats, and overall health and well-being. Led by North Carolina's Chief Resilience Officer, NCORR has leveraged \$3.4 million in state and federal grant funding for implementation of the N.C. Resilient Communities, awarded \$47.3 million in grants and zero-interest loans to help communities recover after multiple hurricanes and build resiliency, and has awarded \$108 million in federal CDBG-DR funds to homeowners, small businesses and local governments.

By following the successful and effective model of North Carolina's Office of Recovery and Resilience, Maryland's Office of Resilience would improve the capacity and ability of our State to administer resilience funds. The more capacity we have to coordinate these efforts, the more efficient Maryland's resilience system will be as a whole - saving lives and livelihoods, and reducing the costs of natural disasters in the process. Having an office that is responsible for and dedicated to the coordination of these complex and ambitious goals will allow Maryland to make sure every dollar and minute we spend on resilience goes as far as possible to benefit each and every one of our communities. **For that reason, I respectfully request a favorable report from this committee.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Fry Hester". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Senator Katie Fry Hester  
Carroll and Howard Counties

# **SB 822 Public Safety Maryland Emergency Managemen**

Uploaded by: Kerr, Cait

Position: FAV

**Thursday March 4, 2021**

**TO:** Paul Pinsky, Chair of Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee and Committee Members

**FROM:** Kelly Leo, The Nature Conservancy, Maryland Resilient Coasts Program Director; and Caitlin Kerr, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation & Climate Policy Analyst

**POSITION:** Support SB 822 Public Safety – Maryland Emergency Management Agency – Office of Resilience

The Nature Conservancy supports SB 822 offered by Senator Hester. SB 822 would establish an Office of Resilience within the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). This new Office would be responsible for providing coordinated guidance on state resilience initiatives, leveraging federal, state, and private resources to streamline pre-disaster mitigation and resilience funding streams, and building and integrating partnerships across sectors into emergency planning and management. The Office would allow the State and local governments to capitalize on significant changes at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through new funding opportunities aimed at pre-disaster mitigation.

In states from Virginia to New Jersey, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oregon, Colorado, Rhode Island, and major cities like Boston and Philadelphia, similar Offices or Chief Resilience Officer positions have already been established. Networks already exist to share information about how to maximize resilience by providing cohesive, strategic, and cross-jurisdictional leadership at the necessary scale. What would make Maryland unique is that the majority of these other Offices of Resilience and Chief Resilience Officer positions have been established by a Governor's executive order on the heels of a major natural disaster to help expedite spending recovery funding. Here in Maryland, we would be strategically creating this Office in order to capitalize on new federal funding programs that will be flush with cash for *pre-disaster* mitigation funding to help *proactively* reduce risk to our communities and increase our resilience.

Creating this new Office allows for improved responses, reduced risk, and a pathway for a more proactive and comprehensive approach to mitigating and limiting natural disaster and climate change impacts. Already, the State has a multitude of programs across many agencies that improve resilience, but increased coordination between each of these programs and local government bodies, including Offices of Emergency Management that are tasked with building community resilience and hazard mitigation, is necessary to best leverage available information, funding, and resources. Creating this office within MEMA will strongly incorporate emergency management perspectives within those projects and programs.

At the federal level, FEMA is improving their funding streams for proactive pre-disaster mitigation, a risk reduction and mitigation strategy that currently goes widely unfunded in Maryland. Alongside this approach comes new funding opportunities through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program. By establishing the Office of Resilience in MEMA, we will improve Maryland's ability to access these funds from its federal counterpart by strengthening pre-disaster mitigation coordination between those agencies.

The Conservancy commends Senator Hester for rising to the increasingly urgent need to establish and fund more proactive approaches for building resilience and mitigating environmental hazards.

**Therefore, we urge a favorable report on SB 822.**

**SB 822 resilience SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kurtz, Joshua

Position: FAV



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education

## Senate Bill 822

Public Safety – Maryland Emergency Management Agency – Office of Resilience

Date: March 4, 2021

To: Senate Education, Health and Environmental  
Affairs Committee

Position: **Support**

From: Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff  
Attorney

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation **SUPPORTS** SB 822 as elevating the need for coordinated resilience planning efforts throughout Maryland.

### **Confronting climate change and improving resiliency supports the Chesapeake Bay's recovery**

This bill establishes the Office of Resilience within the Maryland Emergency Management Agency to coordinate State and local efforts to build resilience to risks identified in the Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan, develop risk assessment tools and administer the National Flood Insurance Program in coordination with the Department of the Environment.

Climate change and sea level rise pose resiliency challenges to Maryland. Rising sea levels threaten to inundate miles of Chesapeake shoreline. For the Chesapeake Bay, warmer waters exacerbate the Bay's dead zones, stressing fish and other forms of marine life critical to the Bay's restoration.<sup>1</sup>

### **Building resiliency to sea-level rise will help protect vulnerable populations along the Bay's coast**

In low-lying areas throughout Maryland, storm surges combined with higher sea levels and increasingly erratic storm activity may create a "perfect storm" that will flood thousands of acres. Many of those areas are economically disadvantaged, and the combination of flooding and limited access to emergency facilities—facilities that might themselves be flooded—could be disastrous.

### **Access to federal and private funding will support Maryland's efforts on climate and the hazards created by climate change**

This bill rightfully elevates the importance of resiliency through establishing an Office of Resilience and requiring the coordination of several available federal, state and private revenue streams. Building resilience will demand resources beyond the State's budget for assessment tools and projects to protect vulnerable communities in the face of rising seas levels and stronger, more frequent storm events.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 822.** For more information, contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at [rclark@cbf.org](mailto:rclark@cbf.org) or 443.995.8753.

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<sup>1</sup> How Climate Change Impacts the Chesapeake Bay, [Climate Change](#), Chesapeake Bay Foundation, last visited 2.12.2021.

# **AIA MD SB 0822 Ofc of Resilience - Support 03.01.2**

Uploaded by: Parts, Chris

Position: FAV





# AIA Maryland

*Promoting Maryland Architecture Since 1965*

1 March 2021

The Honorable Paul Pinsky  
Chair of the Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for SB 0822  
Public Safety-Maryland Emergency Management Agency-Office of Resilience

Dear Chairman Pinsky:

AIA Maryland and many of our colleagues across the US have acted to support communities in responding to disasters and proactively considering measures for preparedness. Disasters faced from forest fires, to tornadoes, hurricanes, tropical storms and heavy rains - and even the recent polar vortex that greatly affected communities and deeply impacted individuals lives, forces us to think and learn from these events and to assess how can we be better prepared and mitigate the impacts of disasters.

We support establishing a Maryland Office of Resilience. We believe that initiatives should proactively mitigate potential flood hazards and to be reactive to appropriately respond to emergency and recovery efforts. We encourage State departments and agencies like MEMA to work with organizations who can bring expertise to planning and code development when considering issues of flood mitigation and, organizations that can provide post disaster assistance. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) actively participates in building code development and enforcement and permitting which impacts communities and structures that already exist as well as new construction. We encourage the Office of Resilience to work with organizations like The AIA to train members and share lessons from post disaster building assessments. We are broadening our network of licensed architects who are trained to assist with post disaster building safety assessments and we connect with other state chapters across the country to build knowledge and share lessons learned.

We believe that incorporating building resilience in our state's planning will assist communities to assess how to lower risks and enable them to have a broad support network to assist should a disaster strike. We support Senate Bill 0822 and planning efforts that will enable us to continue to enjoy over 3,000 miles of shoreline that we have in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Chris Parts, AIA  
Director, Past President

cc: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair  
Kate Fry Hester  
Bryan W, Simonaire

Mary Beth Carozza  
Clarence Lam  
Mary Washington

Arthur Ellis  
Obie Patterson

Jason Gallion  
Edward R Reilly

AIA Maryland Board of Directors

[The American Institute of Architects](#)

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**SB822\_MDE\_LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: abbott, tyler

Position: INFO



# Maryland

## Department of the Environment

Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Ben Crumbles, Secretary  
Horacio Tablada, Deputy Secretary

March 4, 2021

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 822 – Public Safety - Maryland Emergency Management Agency - Office of Resilience**

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed Senate Bill 822, entitled Public Safety - Maryland Emergency Management Agency - Office of Resilience and would like to offer a letter of information about this legislation.

Senate Bill 822 would create an Office of Resilience in the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). The Office of Resilience would be responsible for guiding state's resilience initiatives, leveraging federal and private emergency response funding resources, building partnerships with public, private and non-governmental organizations in all stages of emergency planning and management, administering Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation grant programs and recovery-focused programs, administering state mitigation grants, administering the National Flood Insurance Program in coordination with MDE, and developing flood risk assessment tools for use by statewide programs and projects. It would also repeal the portion of § 5-803 of the Environment Article, which provides that MDE coordinates activities with the National Flood Insurance Program and replaces it with a requirement that MDE coordinate with the Office of Resilience to administer the National Flood Insurance Program.

In effect, this bill takes the National Flood Insurance Program, currently housed in MDE, and makes it a jointly administered program with the newly created Office of Resilience in MEMA. It is not clear where the National Flood Insurance Program will be housed after the bill (in MEMA or MDE), as now both the Environment Article and Public Safety Article would tell each agency to administer the program in coordination with the other. The roles of the Office of Resilience and MDE are not clear and it is confusing as to who has the lead in administering the flood program.

This bill is in direct competition with Senate Bill 0062, which also creates a new § 14-104.1 to the Maryland Emergency Management Agency Act subtitle of the Emergency Management Title of the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Code. The new subtitle would create a Chief Resilience Officer within MEMA and would require MDE to assist the officer with the National Flood Insurance Program.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor Senate Bill 822 during the Committee's

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky

deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at [tyler.abbott@maryland.gov](mailto:tyler.abbott@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Abbott", written over a horizontal line.

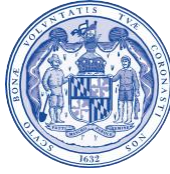
Tyler Abbott

cc: The Honorable Katie Fry Hester

**SB822LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kelly, Catherine

Position: INFO



LARRY HOGAN  
GOVERNOR  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

STATE OF MARYLAND  
MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
FIFTH REGIMENT ARMORY  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201-2288

TIMOTHY E. GOWEN  
MAJOR GENERAL  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

March 4, 2021

Senator Paul Pinsky, Chair  
Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SB 822 - Public Safety - Maryland Emergency Management  
Agency - Office of Resilience**

Dear Chairman Pinsky,

I write to share information on the above referenced Senate bill, which would establish the Office of Resilience within the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). The Office would be responsible for “leveraging federal and private building partnerships with public, private, and non-governmental organizations in all stages of emergency planning and management.” The Office would also be responsible, in coordination with the Department of the Environment to administer the National Flood Insurance Program.

MEMA has both experience and institutional expertise in the broader topic of resilience, and would be well-situated to house this office. MEMA is an expert agency at multi-agency coordination for both acute and longer-term issues, having successfully coordinated similar efforts that require input across stakeholder groups. In addition to MEMA’s ability to coordinate complex problem resolution, MEMA also already works directly with resilience actions. Through MEMA’s Hazard Mitigation efforts, the staff has worked closely with public and private sector partners to ensure the resiliency of our public and private infrastructure. In particular, MEMA played a large role, in coordination with Howard County, to engage in resilience efforts following the Ellicott City floods of 2016 and 2018.

While MEMA staff are well-versed in issues related to resilience, the agency is not equipped to operate this Office at current staffing levels. MEMA would require additional resources to run this new office, as outlined in the bill’s Fiscal Note. It is our hope that this information will be heavily weighted as the Committee considers SB822.

Thank you for your support of the Maryland Military Department. We would be happy to provide any additional information if required. Please feel free to reach out by e-mail [catherine.a.kelly26.nfg@mail.mil](mailto:catherine.a.kelly26.nfg@mail.mil) or by phone 410-446-5390.

Sincerely,

*Catherine A. Kelly*

Catherine A. Kelly  
Director, Legislative and Government Affairs