

City of Annapolis
Mayor Gavin Buckley
160 Duke of Gloucester St
Annapolis, MD 21401



Office of Emergency Management
Director Kevin J. Simmons
199 Taylor Ave
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 8, 2021

Maryland General Assembly:

I offer this written testimony in support of House Bill 1276, introduced by Delegate Shaneka Henson, in my capacity as the Director of the City of Annapolis Office of Emergency Management. House Bill 1276, if enacted, would require the Maryland Emergency Management Agency to conduct a study and make recommendations as to how emergency management can address the needs of minority communities in planning and training efforts.

The City of Annapolis has several vibrant diverse populations, including African American, Hispanic and other communities, seniors, individuals with disabilities, those facing socioeconomic challenges, and more. In my eleven years of experience as Director of Emergency Management, these populations have been disproportionately affected by disasters, most notably the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, due to the differences across communities, engaging in typical outreach and planning initiatives does not always achieve optimal results. Therefore, the provisions of House Bill 1276 would greatly benefit the populations of Annapolis. Furthermore, it would encourage a consistency of best practices in every County and municipality in the State.

I would like to make two recommendations. First, emergency management personnel have performed admirably and professionally throughout the historic challenges associated with COVID-19 for about a year now. Considering the resources required to confront COVID-19, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency should be allowed a full year to complete the requirements of House Bill 1276. In addition, the Bill should consider including the needs of the pediatric (children) population as well.

If you have any questions about my testimony, please contact me at (410) 216-9167 (office), (443) 875-7640 (cell), or by email at kjsimmons@annapolis.gov. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,


Kevin Simmons