



House Bill 706

Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Office of Resilience

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation
Committee

Date: February 18, 2022

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 706. This bill would establish the Office of Resilience in the Maryland Department of Emergency Management.

Emergency management is a year-round process, a constant loop of preparation, training, testing, and revision that strengthens community preparedness and resilience. A strong partnership among state and local agencies is vital to emergency preparedness and response.

The Office of Resilience would be in a strong position to work directly with county emergency management offices to develop scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts and to better align key roles and responsibilities when disasters strike. This partnership will ensure the continuity of government in the face of an innumerable number of catastrophic events.

HB 706 would task the Office of Resilience with (1) administering Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation grant programs and recovery-focused programs; (2) in coordination with the Maryland Department of the Environment, administering the National Flood Insurance Program; (3) administering State mitigation grants; and (4) developing flood risk assessment tools for statewide programs and projects.

The Office of Resilience would provide valuable assistance, guidance, and leadership to its local partners. By aligning these efforts, HB 706 would strengthen and streamline collaboration, communication, and coordination between the State and county governments in times of crisis. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 706.