

Title: **Support Maryland General Assembly Senate Bill 0356 –
Written Testimony**

Speaker: Daniel E. Woomer
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Hearing: Senate Finance
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm

Introduction:

I'm Daniel E. Woomer, a resident of Linthicum Heights, a neighbor of the BWI Marshall Airport, past Vice President of the Linthicum-Shipley Improvement Association, Board member and past president of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit, member of the Citizens Against the SCMaglev, and voting member of the DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable.

I encourage the Senate Finance Committee members to vote **IN FAVOR** with amendments the changes proposed in Senate Bill 0356.

Testimony:

With the establishment of the Citizens Committee for the Enhancement of Communities in 2001, and the implementation of a \$1.00 takeoff and landing fee to fund its annual working budget, communities within two miles of the BWI Marshall have submitted project proposals and receive grants-in-aid to make transportation related repairs within their communities. Such projects included sidewalk and curb replacement, as well as traffic studies and speed calming hump installations.

Senate Bill 0356 would increase the takeoff and landing to \$2.00, and expand the scope of the projects eligible to receive grants. Currently, for example, only existing sidewalks can be replaced. There are many community roads that lack safe sidewalks. The changes proposed in Senate Bill 0356 would allow for these projects to be put forth by the communities for grant consideration by the Citizens Committee for the Enhancement of

Communities, as well as other quality of life, environmental impact improvement, and citizen safety projects, which benefit all residents.

Note, the proposed changes would increase the funds available for community grants, with little impact to the State budget, as the funding for the grants is generated from the BWI Marshall takeoff and landing fees. However, as the prior projects were completed by contractors, the increased funding for community enhancement projects would prove beneficial for area businesses. As suggested in the Financial and Policy Note, I question the need for the addition of a State employee to serve as a grants administrator. The number of annual grants approved has run between 8 to 10 (pre-Covid). Even with doubling the grant funds available as proposed in Senate Bill 0356, the number of actual grants awarded will likely remain small. Existing State resources should be able to absorb the few additional grants throughout the fiscal year. My first suggested amendment, no funding for an additional State employee.

Second amendment I suggest is the removal of line 11, page 3 *"Improve Education, and"*. There are several funding sources for education. Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman has increased school funding. Governor Moore has proposed an additional \$500 million increase in school funding. The funds for the Citizens Committee for the Enhancement of Communities grants should be focused on community projects that improve the surrounding communities' residents' safety and quality of life. Again, as an example, replacement of dilapidated sidewalks, some dating back to the 1930's, improve the safety and quality of life for all, from tots, to parents with strollers, to school children, to senior citizens.

In Summary:

I encourage the Finance Committee members to vote IN FAVOR with amendments the changes proposed in Senate Bill 0356.

Thank you.