CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
Ralph E. Patterson, II, M.A., *Vice President*
Gilbert O. Bowling, III
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

Mark Belton
County Administrator

February 21, 2023

Bill:	SB 539 Economic Development – Tri–County Council for Southern Maryland Membership
Committee:	Senate – Finance
Position:	FAVORABLE

Dear Madam Chair Griffith, Vice Chairwoman Klausmeier, and Committee Members:

The County Commissioners of Charles County support Senate Bill 539— Economic Development – Tri–County Council for Southern Maryland Membership. The bill provides for the addition of one voting member for every 45,000 residents from each participating county, to be appointed by the commissioners of the county.

Our Board of Charles County Commissioners supports the mission of Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, and recognizes the importance of the Council to the region. The proposed changes in membership would allow for more involvement from our community members that reflects the proportional impact of the Council's decisions on the affected communities. We believe the decisions of the Council that impact our region, to include transportation coordination, agricultural development, workforce development, and veterans support, warrant more direct input from our residents. There are significant demographic differences between Charles County and our regional partner counties of Calvert and St. Mary's, that deserve consideration as TCCSMD works towards identifying and executing regional priorities.

Enhanced input from citizen appointments to the TCCSMD add legitimacy to the decisions made and provide an opportunity for varying perspectives and experiences to inform the discussion. For the reasons stated, we urge a favorable report by the Senate Finance Committee for SB 539 Economic Development – Tri–County Council for Southern Maryland Membership.

Sincerely,

County Commissioners of Charles County
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

cc: Charles County Delegation