



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 449

DATE: February 20, 2024

SPONSOR: Delegate Ivey

ASSIGNED TO: Economic Matters Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Garrett Fitzgerald (garrett.fitzgerald@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Favorable

Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Funding for Underserved and Overburdened Communities

Flooding is the most frequent severe weather event and the costliest natural disaster. Floods not only affect high-risk coastal areas but, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 25% of flood insurance claims come from moderate-to-low-risk areas like Montgomery County. Just one inch of floodwater can cause up to \$25,000 in damage. Flooding can be especially devastating to community members with pre-existing vulnerabilities that might impact their capacity to prevent, prepare for, and cope with flooding.

This bill will increase the minimum budget of the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program to \$20 million annually starting in fiscal year 2026. This represents a significant budget increase, and likely still meets only a small percentage of the need and opportunity for this program to benefit Maryland residents.

This bill will also require that at least 40% of funding provided under the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program be used for projects located in or directly benefitting underserved or overburdened communities. This is an important provision to ensure that funding is prioritized to support communities most vulnerable to the impacts of flooding. Montgomery County includes a number of census tracts that would qualify under this requirement.

We respectfully request that the Economic Matters Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 449.