



# TOWN OF COLMAR MANOR

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Thursday, February 29, 2024

**Mayor Monica Casañas**

**Town Council**

Maliek Harding, Ward 1  
Irina Hobbs, Ward 2  
Keith Brooks, Ward 3  
Melinda Mendoza, Ward 4

**Town Administrator**

Greg Holcomb

**Clerk-Treasurer**

Dan Baden

**Chief of Police**

Tracy Stone

**Public Works Supervisor**

Al Niemann

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Energy, Education, and Environment Committee:

As the Mayor of the Town of Colmar Manor, I write to express my unwavering support for SB0659, "Prince George's Gateway Development Authority - Modifications." Our town, often celebrated as "the little town that can," has stood resilient through nearly a century of urban renewal, demographic and environmental shifts. For context our town is located east of the boundary between Washington, D.C. and Prince George's County. The community is situated south of Bladensburg Road, east of Fort Lincoln Cemetery, and west of the Anacostia River.

We have a rich history and are strategically positioned for success as a gateway into Prince George's County, yet we don't have a welcome to Maryland or Welcome to Prince George's County marker on the thoroughfare that goes into our county. We face the challenges of high taxation and the extensive demands of our municipal government. These challenges and lack of focus in our area hinder our ability to develop comprehensive plans that stimulate economic growth, foster affordable housing, and improve transportation, all goals that are representative of the positive changes we want to see in our county. Our region is at a critical juncture, grappling with aging infrastructure and a lack of cohesive planning that stifles our economic potential.

The establishment and subsequent modification of the Gateway Arts Development Authority represent a turning point and beacon of hope for Colmar Manor and neighboring communities. This Authority is a mechanism for development; At its core a testament to our collective resolve to embrace the demands of the 21st-century workforce and to showcase the innovation, dynamism, and economic opportunities that our county and state has to offer.

The inclusion of Colmar Manor within the scope of the Gateway Arts Development Authority is crucial. Our town, alongside our neighbors, embodies the rich diversity of Prince George's County, housing underserved communities of color, a vibrant immigrant population, and some of the oldest settlements in the region. The Authority's support in crafting a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan is instrumental in uplifting our residents and enhancing housing, economic development, neighborhoods, and transportation.

*"The Little Town that Can"*

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SB0659 is not merely a legislative proposal; it is a lifeline for Colmar Manor and the surrounding areas. It is a commitment to revitalizing these gateway communities and positioning them as thriving examples of what the Gateway to Prince George's County can achieve. By supporting this bill, you are investing in the future of our town, the Gateway Arts District, and the broader region.

I urge you to recognize the transformative potential of SB0659 and to lend it your support. Together, we can foster a future that is reflective of the aspirations, resilience, and dynamism of Colmar Manor and its neighbors.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I look forward to the positive outcomes that your support for SB0659 will undoubtedly bring to our community and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Monica Casañas".

**Monica Casañas**

Mayor, Town of Colmar Manor

***"The Little Town that Can"***

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