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## **SB 148 – Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program – Environmental Justice Funding**

**Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,  
February 6, 2024**

### **Position: SUPPORT (FAV)**

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Public Justice Center (PJC) is a nonprofit public interest law firm that assists over 800 renters and their families each year. We stand with tenants to protect and expand their rights to safe, habitable, affordable, and non-discriminatory housing.

Public Justice Center urges you to support of SB 148, a bill to increase the funding available to the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program (CFMGP) and to allocate at least 40% of this funding to communities with environmental justice (EJ) concerns and prioritize “overburdened” and “underserved” communities to align with the language in Maryland statute.

PJC’s tenant-clients often see the devastating effects of flooding in their apartments first-hand. We can all picture, and many of us have experienced, floodwaters rushing through our streets during a storm, damaging our homes and community infrastructure. Flooding can also have longer term impacts if its effects are not fully remediated, like the presence of black mold in homes, which is an asthma trigger and respiratory irritant. We agree with the Maryland Department of the Environment’s assessment of the CFMGP: With climate change resulting in more frequent and intense storms in Maryland, the CFMGP is more relevant now than ever.

This bill, through its allocation of funds to overburdened and underserved communities, recognizes that those who contribute least to climate change are often the ones to suffer first and worst from its consequences. PJC’s low income-tenant clients are more likely to have no other option than to live in apartment buildings and other housing that is prone to such flooding and thus suffer these consequences more often.

We thank Senator Washington for his leadership in introducing this bill and urge a favorable report. Public Justice Center asks that the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee **issue a report of FAVORABLE on SB 148**. If you have any questions, please contact C. Matthew Hill [hillm@publicjustice.org](mailto:hillm@publicjustice.org), (410) 625-9409 Ext. 229