



Testimony in SUPPORT of SB148
Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Funding for Overburdened Communities
House - Environment and Transportation Committee
Jose Coronado-Flores , On Behalf of CASA

February 6th, 2024

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

CASA is pleased to offer **favorable testimony in support of SB148 - Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Funding for Overburdened Communities**. CASA is the largest immigrant services and advocacy organization in Maryland, and in the Mid-Atlantic region, with a membership of over 155,000 Black and Latino immigrants and working families.

SB148 is important legislation that will address the inconveniences, damages, and dangers that flooding has on underserved and overburdened communities in Maryland. In particular, CASA is invested in seeing this bill pass, because our members reside in communities where flooding and stormwater management is often inadequate. I want to uplift the story of a CASA member and his family. Oscar R. resides in East Riverdale, MD, in a community that is not only overburdened and underserved as defined by its EJ score but also is in the Anacostia River's floodplain. In 2021 and 2022, Oscar, his wife, and 4 year-old daughter experienced two back-to-back years of devastating flooding that destroyed many of their belongings. They were forced to rebuild not once, but twice. Low-income families across the state have more to lose and less wealth to rebuild.

Furthermore, CASA members reside in Rock Creek Wood Apartments in Rockville, MD. This particular complex is notorious for severe flooding. Flooding in this community goes beyond inconvenience as severe flooding last year resulted in a death and 150 tenants displaced¹. Property damages, loss of valuables, and the trauma evoked by these events add to the reasons why communities like Rock Creek need better flood management. Looking at the census tract in which this complex lies shows that over 40% of the population is low-income and over 50% is non-white.²

Rains and severe weather are only going to intensify and occur more frequently, and, without action, our most vulnerable communities are going to keep suffering. For this reason, CASA urges a favorable report.

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<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/maryland/rock-creek-woods-apartments-flood-sensor-to-be-installed/65-deea97d8-b39b-4569-a262-078520a6d2b9>

² <https://mdewin64.mde.state.md.us/EJ/>