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Uploaded by: Malcolm Augustine

Position: FAV



**SB0659/633722/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

08 FEB 24  
14:45:03

BY: Prince George's County Senators  
(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 659

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 4, after “the” insert “Prince George’s County Redevelopment”;  
and in line 5, after the first “the” insert “Prince George’s Gateway Development”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 16, after the first “**THE**” insert “**PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY  
REDEVELOPMENT**”.

# **SB659 - Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Malcolm Augustine

Position: FAV

MALCOLM AUGUSTINE  
*Legislative District 47*  
Prince George's County

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Executive Nominations Committee

Education, Energy and the  
Environment Committee



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 214  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
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Malcolm.Augustine@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 29, 2024

**Senate Bill 659 - Prince George's Gateway Development Authority – Modifications**

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **Senate Bill 659 - Prince George's Gateway Development Authority – Modifications**, which aims to enhance the capabilities of the Prince George's Gateway Development Authority, a cause I am deeply passionate about.

I want to highlight the importance of regular meetings within the authority. By increasing the mandated frequency to at least four times per year, we are ensuring consistent progress and vigilant oversight on our comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan. Regular meetings are the backbone of effective planning, accountability, and responsiveness to the diverse needs of our community. In recognizing the value of collaboration, I am particularly pleased with the support extended by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The provision mandating staff support in consultation with the department is a strategic move to harness their expertise and resources, thereby augmenting the authority's effectiveness. This collaborative effort guarantees that our initiatives align with state-level objectives and adhere to best practices in urban development.

Our unwavering focus remains on the holistic betterment of residents, housing, neighborhoods, economic development, and transportation. This legislative proposal reinforces our commitment to comprehensive community upliftment. Looking at the broader picture, this bill has far-reaching implications for economic development. It strategically positions Prince George's County as an attractive gateway for neighboring areas, including Washington, D.C., thereby elevating our regional competitiveness. The emphasis on housing and neighborhood initiatives directly impacts the well-being of our community members, rendering Prince George's County an even more desirable place to live and work. The authority's diligent work is poised to address critical needs, supporting the beautification and revitalization of our neighborhoods.

The proposed amendment aims to designate the staffing responsibilities to the Prince George's County Redevelopment Authority. This entity possesses a wealth of redevelopment experience and expertise specifically tailored to the needs of Prince George's County. This strategic decision ensures that the Authority's valuable knowledge will play a crucial role in formulating and executing the comprehensive plan for the targeted area focused on the development of housing and working spaces for artists. This alignment is anticipated to enhance the effectiveness and precision of the redevelopment efforts, fostering a vibrant and conducive environment for artistic expression and creativity within the community.

MALCOLM AUGUSTINE  
*Legislative District 47*  
Prince George's County

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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I urge your support for this vital legislative measure, as it paves the way for a brighter future for Prince George's County and its residents. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant community that stands as a testament to our shared commitment to progress and upliftment.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I urge the committee to give a **favorable** report for **Senate Bill 659 - Prince George's Gateway Development Authority – Modifications.**

Sincerely,

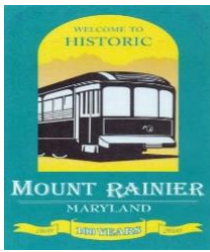
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malcolm Augustine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Malcolm Augustine

# **Favorable Support for Senate Bill 0659.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mayor Celina Benitez

Position: FAV



## Office of The Mayor Celina R. Benitez

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1 Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, Maryland 20712 Telephone: (301) 985-6585 [MountRainierMD.org](http://MountRainierMD.org)

RE: Favorable Support for Senate Bill 0659  
The Prince George's Gateway Development Authority - Modifications.

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Energy, Education, and Environment Committee,

I am writing to you as Mayor Celina Benitez of the City of Mount Rainier, a vibrant and diverse community that stands as a testament to the resilience and creativity of its residents. Our commitment to the arts, development, and the preservation of our city's unique character and values remains unwavering. As we continue to advocate for the growth and prosperity of Mount Rainier and the surrounding regions, it is with great enthusiasm that I express my support for SB0659, the Prince George's Gateway Development Authority - Modifications.

Since the establishment of the Gateway Arts Development Authority, we have witnessed the potential for transformative change within our communities. However, to realize this potential fully, it is imperative that we implement modifications to ensure the Authority operates with increased efficiency and effectiveness. The requirement for the Authority to meet at least four times per year, coupled with the provision for staff support in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, represents a crucial step towards achieving our shared goals for neighborhood revitalization and economic development.

The City of Mount Rainier, with its rich diversity and dedication to the arts, is a microcosm of the promise that lies within our region. Our city is home to over eight thousand residents and boasts the highest population density per square foot in Maryland. This density brings challenges, but also opportunities—opportunities for economic development, community engagement, and cultural expression. The Gateway Arts Development Authority has the potential to harness these opportunities, driving growth and innovation without displacing the very individuals who have contributed to our community's vibrancy.

The modifications proposed in SB0659 are not merely administrative adjustments; they are a reaffirmation of our commitment to equitable development, community empowerment, and sustainable economic growth. By ensuring regular meetings and dedicated support from the Department of Housing and Community Development, we can enhance the Authority's capacity to support comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that benefit residents, housing, neighborhoods, economic development, and transportation.

The City of Mount Rainier has long recognized the importance of economic development and revitalization. Despite our limited resources, we have made significant strides towards revitalizing our city. However, the challenges we face are not confined to the boundaries of Mount Rainier—they are regional in scope. The Gateway Arts Development Authority stands as a beacon of hope, a means through which we can collectively address decades of underdevelopment and build a future that reflects the aspirations of all Marylanders.

I urge you to support the modifications to SB0659, thereby strengthening the Prince George's Gateway Development Authority's ability to make a lasting, positive impact on our communities. Together, we

can ensure that the gateway to Maryland is not only a passageway but a destination—a place where people from all walks of life come to live, work, and thrive.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I look forward to the positive changes that SB0659, with your support, will bring to our region. Please feel free to contact me at 301-985-6585 or via email [Mayorbenitez@MountRainierMD.org](mailto:Mayorbenitez@MountRainierMD.org) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Celina R. Benitez*

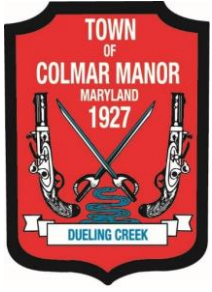
Mayor Celina Benitez, City of Mount Rainier



**Letter- Support Letter SB659.pdf**

Uploaded by: Monica Casanas

Position: FAV



# 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"*

3701 Lawrence St, Colmar Manor, MD 20722

P (301) 277-4920 | F (301)699-5245 | [www.colmarmanor.org](http://www.colmarmanor.org)

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"***

3701 Lawrence St, Colmar Manor, MD 20722

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