



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

WILLIAM J. THORNE
Legislative Associate

BILL NO.: **HB 256**

TITLE: Waterway Incident Notification System (WINS) Workgroup

SPONSOR: Delegate Jones

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

DATE: February 14, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** House Bill 256 – Waterway Incident Notification System (WINS) Workgroup. This legislation would create a workgroup tasked with establishing a communications system that can alert both recreational and commercial boaters to emergencies or disasters on the Chesapeake Bay and other surrounding waterways.

It is imperative that the State of Maryland and local jurisdictions facilitate the infrastructure necessary to respond to disasters. The proposed communications system would address this need by significantly enhancing the safety of recreational and commercial boaters. The State of Maryland and Local governments must collaborate frequently and consistently to prevent incidents on the water. Accordingly, Baltimore County requests an amendment to HB 256 allowing the Baltimore County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to have a representative on the created workgroup, in addition to the other individual Counties named in the bill. Baltimore County first responders are responsible for responding to incidents in much of the Chesapeake Bay. Additionally, with the growth of Trade Point Atlantic and its marine terminal consisting of six deep-water multi-commodity berths, Baltimore County will have a larger role to play moving forward in ensuring the safety of commercial boating on the Bay and in its waterways.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 256 from the House Environment and Transportation committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.