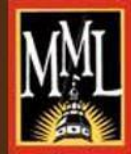




Prince George's County Municipal Association

An Association of 27 Municipalities



March 25, 2024

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chairman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for SB148 - Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Funding for Underserved and Overburdened Communities and Areas at Extreme Risk of Flooding

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

The Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) is in support of SB 148. This bill seeks to enhance the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program by augmenting funding to \$20 million and mandating that at least forty percent of these funds be allocated to specific communities facing significant environmental justice concerns. This pivotal initiative furnishes local governments with additional resources to combat flooding and alleviate some of the most severe ramifications of climate change. SB 148 will foster equity in flood management for underserved communities by channeling essential resources to historically vulnerable areas.

Many of our municipalities have firsthand experience with the importance of this legislation. The County encompasses nine watersheds including segments of the Patuxent (Upper, Middle, Lower), Potomac (Upper, Lower), and Anacostia. The Piscataway and Western Branch watersheds are entirely situated within Prince George's County, while the Oxon Creek watershed lies between the confluence of the Anacostia and Upper Potomac.

Allocating funds to underserved and overburdened communities will yield tangible benefits. Out of the 214 census tracts in Prince George's County, Maryland, 63 are both overburdened and underserved, and 146 are solely underserved. A mere 5 (2.3%) census tracts are neither underserved nor overburdened. Given that many of our municipalities grapple with limited budgets and minimal staff, coupled with the escalating frequency and intensity of storms, flooding has become increasingly prevalent. Consequently, we encounter challenges in supporting affected residents and businesses.

SB 148 presents an opportunity for grant funding that could enhance our understanding of watershed health in our communities. It could facilitate the financing of flood control and watershed management capital projects, as well as assist in covering the capital expenses associated with the design, acquisition, and implementation of flood warning systems. Due to our constrained resources, several municipalities

are unable to maintain an emergency management department. SB 148 directs investments towards flood mitigation and prevention efforts that will not only benefit Prince Georgians but also benefit all Marylanders. Therefore, PGCMA respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 148.

Sincerely,

Melinda Mendoza

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