



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

February 24, 2025

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **Support for Senate Bill 980-Natural Resources-Maryland Heritage Areas Authority-Funding and Grants**

Dear Senator Guzzone:

The Board of County Commissioners of Washington County (the “Board”) unanimously support the passage of SB 980. The County’s support is based on two factors. First, the Bill will allow the State to pay for a larger percentage of natural resource investment projects. This will in turn encourage larger projects and more substantial investment to occur, which will lead to improved returns and ultimately increase Maryland’s effective use of natural resources. Second, this Bill will have a minimal impact on the State’s finances. In Maryland, funding for natural resource development grants comes from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund. These funds are already allocated under existing Maryland Law and cannot be used for other purposes.

Washington County is home to numerous State and Federal parks including sites, like the Antietam Battlefield, that are critically important to the history of Maryland and of the United States generally. These parks and historical sites already represent a major source of income for Washington County and, by extension, the State of Maryland. This Bill will support the development of larger projects that will enhance this already incredibly valuable resource.

For the reasons stated above, we ask that you support the passage of SB 980.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY:


John F. Barr, President