



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGERS AFFILIATE

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF SB 564/ HB 865

CATASTROPHIC EVENT ACCOUNT – TRANSFER OF FUNDS - STATE DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE / HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 21, 2025

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Emergency Managers Affiliate **SUPPORTS SB 564/HB 865 - Catastrophic Event Account - Transfer of Funds - State Disaster Recovery Fund**, which seeks to strengthen Maryland’s ability to respond effectively to natural disasters and catastrophic events. This critical legislation would authorize the transfer of funds from the Catastrophic Event Account to the State Disaster Recovery Fund when the Fund’s balance has been depleted due to prior use, transfers, or anticipated costs exceeding its available resources. Additionally, the bill would streamline the review process by adjusting the number of days the Legislative Policy Committee has to assess and comment on fund transfers before the Governor may proceed via a budget amendment.

The State Disaster Recovery Fund plays an essential role in ensuring a rapid and efficient response to disasters, providing the necessary resources for relief, recovery, and rebuilding efforts. With Maryland facing more frequent and intense natural disasters, it is imperative that our disaster recovery system remains robust and well-funded.

This legislation, which proposes reducing the Legislative Policy Committee’s review period from 15 days to 5 days, allows for the faster distribution of disaster relief funds to impacted communities. Expedited review ensures minimal delays in recovery efforts, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of the state’s disaster response. The proposed reduction in review time is supported by comprehensive initial damage assessments conducted by Emergency Managers in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, ensuring that funding decisions are based on reliable and timely information.

Providing Emergency Managers with access to the necessary funds without delay is crucial to protecting Marylanders in times of crisis. SB 564/HB 865 promotes an efficient and responsive disaster relief system by enabling the State Disaster Recovery Fund and the Catastrophic Event Account to work together, providing timely and reliable assistance when it is needed most. Thus, the EM Affiliate asks this Committee to give SB 564/HB 865 a FAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,

Preeti Emrick

Preeti Emrick

MACo EM Affiliate President