



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DIVISION OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

Lara Fritts, Director

February 3, 2025

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

RE: Support for SB0409 Economic Development - County or Municipal Corporation Economic Development Authority - Powers and Use of Proceeds

Dear Mister Chairman,

As the Director of the Division of Economic Opportunity for Frederick County Government, I am responsible for enhancing the commercial tax base for the County while ensuring good jobs for our residents. As part of this important work efforts are underway for revitalizing traditionally underinvested areas throughout the County, most notably the implementation of the recently adopted South Corridors plan. As the economic driver for the County - our economic development program lacks the financial tools necessary to participate with the private sector in redevelopment to ensure the implementation of this community led plan.

Maryland counties have limited tools to address complex redevelopment and economic development needs. By expanding the uses of funds under the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) language as proposed in SB0409 Counties would be accelerate redevelopment, invest in affordable housing, and prepare sites to be ready for development with the goal of accelerating economic growth. SB0409 is enabling legislation providing local control to counties of their tax increment and the ability to work with our County Councils to create a Redevelopment Authority and project areas. Concisely, SB0409 makes changes to the state's IDA code by allowing for name change from industrial development authorities to something more reflective of modern economic development (such as Redevelopment Authority) and broaden the permitted uses of tax increment financing revenues to allow counties across Maryland to fund redevelopment programs that will target investments to underinvested areas of our communities.

In conclusion, I request the esteemed Budget and Taxation Committee to give SB0409 a favorable report. By empowering our local governments with the tools proposed in SB0409, we can revitalize our communities, accelerate economic growth, and ensure a prosperous future for our state. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lara Fritts, CECD, FM