

HB128 - SUPPORT

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HB 128 — Responding to Emergency Needs from Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025

Joint Meeting of Economic Matters and Environment and Transportation Committees
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Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, Members of the Economic Matters Committee, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB0128. Currently, Maryland taxpayers pay the full cost of climate disasters and adaptation projects, for our own properties and in addition for large expenses for municipal and state climate mitigation efforts.

I have had significant impacts on my property due to flooding, including loss of two large oak trees. To mitigate the additional runoff after loss of those trees I have installed a dry well and a French drain system in my basement.

These costs are common in my neighborhood - in 2022 a local volunteer committee, Takoma Stormwater Solutions, circulated a survey asking for information on stormwater through 22 neighborhood listservs; 269 households responded. About half the respondents said they'd have had damage due to flooding, and the source was identified as rain directly on their property, underground springs, water flowing downhill from neighbors, and water from street or sidewalk overflows. Respondents described a range of damages, including eroded building structures, loss of trees due to sitting water, settling of the house, ruined rugs and walls, and more. Twenty-two respondents said it cost them between \$10,000 and \$20,000 to repair the damage, and 12 respondents had spent over \$20,000. In addition to the repair of water damage, many of the respondents had implemented changes to prevent stormwater damage including improving gutters and downspouts, installing French drain systems, and reconfiguring the terrain of the property. As with the damage repair there were a sizable number who had spent over \$10,000 to these changes to reduce stormwater damage (25% of respondents).

I'm sure you know of the price to Howard County to protect Ellicott City from another flood - [\\$200,000 million for 7 different mitigation projects!](#) The cost for this project has been widely reported, and there any many more across Maryland at a significant cost for the state. Sea level

rise is impacting our coastal cities and wetlands and requires expensive remediation. We can only anticipate more flooding in our state with subsequent continued high costs for remediation.

We and our neighbors—homeowners and renters alike—need and deserve a break, and that’s precisely what the RENEW Act offers. RENEW requires out-of-state oil and gas companies to pay for the cost of climate disasters and adaptation, and it does so in a way that prevents those companies from passing on the cost to consumers. Plus, it’s only fair that the companies that have caused climate change pay for the damage they are causing. Among many other possible projects, RENEW money can pay for the cost to the state of updating maps of floodplains, and then to cover the costs for strategic adaptation projects.

Please do the right thing for Maryland taxpayers and pass the RENEW Act. We urge a favorable report.