

Mayor
Sarah Franklin

Commissioners
Derrick Brooks
Charles Colbert
Karen Lott
Alma Prevatte



Friday, February 25, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Honorable Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Town of Upper Marlboro, I am writing to express our appreciation for the intent behind **HB 990**, which seeks to establish clear educational and experience standards for municipal financial officers. Ensuring strong financial oversight is a priority for all local governments, and we recognize the value of professionalizing these critical roles. However, we have significant concerns about the financial and administrative burdens this legislation may impose, particularly on smaller municipalities with limited budgets and access to qualified candidates.

HB 990 mandates specific educational requirements and professional experience for individuals overseeing municipal finances. While we support efforts to improve financial oversight, we believe the bill, as currently drafted, could be cost-prohibitive for small municipalities that do not have the revenue base to compete for candidates with such credentials. The requirement to meet these standards, particularly in municipalities with historically lean administrative structures, could lead to substantial recruitment costs, salary increases, or even an inability to fill these essential roles.

To ensure the goals of **HB 990** are achievable for municipalities of all sizes, we respectfully propose the following amendments:

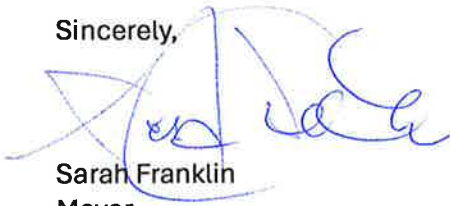
1. **Flexible Qualifications Pathways** – Allow equivalent professional certifications, such as Certified Public Finance Officers (CPFO) or extensive municipal finance experience, to count toward meeting the bill's requirements.
2. **Extended Implementation Timeline** – Adjust the effective date beyond June 30, 2030, to provide municipalities with adequate time to transition existing employees or budget for potential increases in salary and hiring costs.
3. **Financial Assistance Considerations** – Establish a state-supported grant or reimbursement program to help smaller municipalities offset the costs associated with compliance.

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These amendments would maintain the bill's intent while ensuring municipalities, particularly those with smaller budgets and staffing constraints, can realistically meet these new requirements. We urge the committee to consider these modifications to prevent unintended financial hardship on local governments while still achieving the objective of strengthening municipal financial oversight.

Thank you for your consideration. The Town of Upper Marlboro looks forward to working with you to develop an approach that benefits all Maryland municipalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Franklin', is written over a circular blue stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sarah Franklin
Mayor