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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND**

January 24, 2025

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Opposition to House Bill 28—Constitutional Amendment—Form of County Government-Requirement to Adopt Charter Home Rule

Dear Delegate Korman:

The Board of County Commissioners of Washington County (the "Board") unanimously opposes the passage of HB 28. As currently drafted, HB 28 would create a Constitutional Amendment mandating that every County in the State adopt a Charter Home Rule form of government. The Board opposes this bill for several reasons.

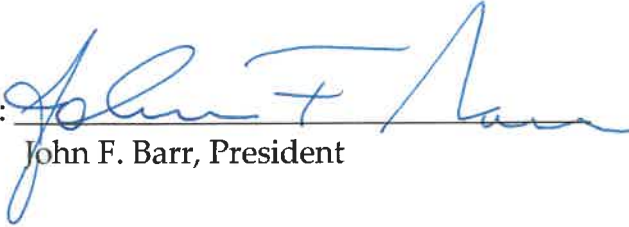
Adopting a Constitutional amendment that requires every County in the State to change its form of government presents several problems and undesirable consequences. First, Code Counties and Commissioner Counties forced to change their forms of government will suffer serious financial and economic harm. Dramatic changes involving the County's rights to establish a bonding authority, or tax caps will be severely altered. Furthermore, creating an effectively new branch of government to replace the Commissioner form of government will be extremely expensive, time-consuming, and disruptive to the flow of work. The County estimates that it will incur more than \$2,000,000 in costs to comply with such an amendment.

HB 28 would also violate the fundamental rights of the citizens, who, through their elected County officials, would have no control over their form of County government.

The Board strongly opposes the passage of HB 28, which would create institutional chaos within non-charter Counties, and would violate the fundamentally American concept that local government governs best.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: 
John F. Barr, President

cc (via email): Washington County Delegation