

Environmental & Transportation Committee
100 State Circle, State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 768

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, & Committee Members,

We are writing to request your full support of House Bill 768, titled “Municipal Incorporation – County Commissioners or County Council – Required Approval of Referendum Request,” legislation introduced by Delegates S. Johnson and A. Johnson. It is under consideration by the Environment and Transportation Committee on February 18, 2025. This bill addresses crucial aspects of the incorporation process for municipalities, in general, and for us, specifically in Harford County.

House Bill 768 aligns with our shared commitment to promoting effective and responsible governance in Harford County. Therefore, we ask that you support this bill and assist with its passage through the legislative process.

In addition to its legal implications, this bill addresses essential needs within the Edgewood community and other areas of Harford County. Some of these vital needs include:

- Centralizing zoning and development decisions to include community residents who are immediately affected by these decisions.
- Self-determination of the reinvestment of the community’s tax dollars
- Providing the community members a voice and a chance to shape a new municipal government.
- Status as a stakeholder in the functions of a County with just three municipalities
- The overall ability to contest the decisions of a County Council whose background and persuasions may differ greatly from that of unincorporated communities in Harford County

House Bill 768 proposes necessary amendments to the existing law, particularly in Articles related to Local Government, to ensure a transparent and accountable process for municipal incorporation. The bill enhances public participation and oversight into the incorporation process by requiring a certain organizing committee to make determinations and provide reports to the county commissioners or county council.

Furthermore, the provisions outlined in the bill, such as specifying the approval of a referendum request and posting relevant reports on the county's website, contribute to fostering

community engagement and informed decision-making. These measures are essential for upholding the democratic principles of local governance.

I believe that House Bill 768 aligns with our commitment to promoting effective and responsible governance in Harford County. Therefore, we urge you to support this bill and its passage in the House of Delegates.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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