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SB35\HB990 – Municipal Appointees and Employees - Financial Oversight - Required Education and Experience OPPOSE

The City of Greenbelt respectfully opposes Senate Bill 35\House Bill 990, which mandates extensive educational qualifications, professional experience, and continuing education requirements for municipal employees and appointees responsible for financial oversight. While we recognize the intent of the legislation to ensure accountability and financial integrity within local governments, we believe the bill imposes undue burdens on municipalities, particularly in the following ways:

1. Unfunded Mandate

SB 35\HB 990 represents a costly unfunded mandate at a time when municipalities are bracing for significant reductions in state aid. Requiring municipalities to absorb the costs associated with training, professional development, and expanded administrative responsibilities will exacerbate existing fiscal pressures without providing additional state support.

2. Impact on Recruitment and Retention

The stringent requirements for education and experience significantly narrow the pool of qualified candidates. Small and mid-sized municipalities like Greenbelt may struggle to attract or retain talent for financial oversight roles, particularly when competing with larger jurisdictions that can offer more competitive compensation packages.

3. Administrative Burden

The record-keeping and reporting requirements outlined in SB 35\HB 990 necessitate new or expanded administrative systems. For many municipalities, this will divert resources from critical public services to compliance efforts.

4. Premature Legislation

The City of Greenbelt is committed to ensuring financial accountability and regularly reviews its hiring and training practices. However, this legislation is being introduced without a fiscal note to assess its true impact. Such far-reaching measures should be thoroughly vetted to avoid unintended consequences on local government operations.

For questions or more information, please contact Josué Salmerón, City Manager, at jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov.