TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE:	House Appropriations	**DATE:**	March 3, 2026
POSITION:	Favorable	**BILL:**	HB 609

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 609, which repeals the provision from the 2025 Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) that redirected $25 million in transfer tax revenue annually to the General Fund through FY 2029.

Program Open Space (POS) is a cornerstone of municipal recreation. By restoring this revenue, SB 424 ensures that the local share of POS remains robust, allowing cities and towns to acquire and develop outdoor spaces that improve the quality of life for our residents. Likewise, many of our member municipalities are deeply integrated into rural landscapes. Restoring funding to the Rural Legacy Program and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) protects the agricultural and natural heritage that defines the borders and character of our towns.

Maryland's municipalities are the primary implementers of the local projects funded by these revenues. When these funds are diverted, our ability to maintain green space and manage urban growth is directly compromised. It also creates long-term uncertainty for municipal planning. Restoring these funds allows local governments to proceed with planned conservation and recreation projects with confidence.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 609

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

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