



TESTIMONY FOR SB0687
Environment - Flood Risk Review Process – Establishment

Bill Sponsor: Senator Washington
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition
Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0687 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

With all the changes to the weather patterns, and water level rise due to climate change, Maryland is experiencing a much greater flooding risk. Planning that has been done at a macro level is often disrupted by new developments in places that are either at risk themselves, or put other adjacent areas at risk.

This bill, if enacted, would require a flood risk review process for any areas that are considered a flood risk. This process would apply to the review of any plan or permit related to a proposed development within a flood risk area including an evaluation of the potential impacts of the proposed development on downstream flooding, and the cumulative impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development in the watershed. Before issuing a final determination, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) would consult with the local jurisdiction, the Department of Planning, and potentially the Department of Natural Resources.

This legislation would also require MDE to condition, modify, or deny approval of the plan or permit if they determine that the proposed development would increase downstream flood hazards or flood damage to existing communities, impair the effectiveness of watershed-scale flood management strategies, or conflict with stormwater quantity standards.

Our members believe in being prepared and planning ahead. This is not just a possible disaster that we would be avoiding, it's an disaster that is already upon us.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.