



March 24, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Unfavorable: SB 1005 – MNCPPC – General Counsel and Powers of Local Planning Boards

Dear, Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the NAIOP Maryland Chapters, representing 700 companies involved in all aspects of commercial, light-industrial, and mixed-use real estate, I am writing to recommend your unfavorable report on SB 1005.

Overview of SB 1005

SB 1005 proposes a significant restructuring of the centralized legal, personnel management and administrative functions of the Commission, transferring those responsibilities to the individual planning boards in Montgomery County and Prince George's County. The bill would eliminate the position of Commission General Counsel, requiring that the two counties appoint individual legal counsel for operations in their respective counties. Also, the county planning boards, rather than the Commission, would exercise direct authority over the professional and technical staff providing planning and other related services in their jurisdiction.

Rationale for NAIOP's Position

For nearly a century, MNCPPC has provided a coordinated, efficient system for land use, park planning, and development review in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Its centralized structure enables both counties to share specialized legal, HR, IT, and administrative functions as well as policy analysis and planning expertise. The Commission framework provides these collaborative advantages, but each county planning board remains independent with exclusive authority over regulations, development review zoning ordinances and zoning maps.

Our members believe SB 1005 would disrupt this proven model, creating uncertainty, higher costs, and reduced consistency in regional planning. It would replace a well-functioning, nationally respected, and cost-effective framework with a duplicative and less coordinated structure. For the commercial real estate industry, county residents, and other stakeholders who depend on the Commission's professionalism and predictability, the impacts would be directly harmful.

For these reasons, NAIOP respectfully recommends your unfavorable report on SB 1005.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Ballentine".

Tom Ballentine, Vice President for Policy
NAIOP – Maryland Chapters, *The Association for Commercial Real Estate*

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members
Nick Manis – Manis, Canning Assoc.