

March 16, 2026

**Delivery Via Email Only**

The Honorable Julie Palakovich Carr, Chair  
Montgomery County House  
Lowe House Office Building, Room 202  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Benjamin F. Kramer, Chair  
Montgomery County Senate Delegation  
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 401  
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Ronald L. Watson, Chair  
Prince George's County Senate Delegation  
James Senate Office Building, Room 121  
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Nicole A. Williams, Chair  
Prince George's County House Delegation  
Lowe House Office Building, Room 207  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Why SB 1005 (Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission General Counsel and Powers of Local Planning Boards – Alterations) Is A Very Bad Idea**

Dear Bi-County Leadership:

As former members of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“Commission”) who also served as members of the Commission’s Prince George’s County Planning Board, we write today with one voice. Together, the undersigned cohort spans more than 50 years of Commission stewardship and well over a century of combined public service devoted to the residents of Prince George’s County.

For the reasons discussed below, we join with our colleagues serving now on the [Commission’s Montgomery County Planning Board](#) to unequivocally oppose the General Assembly’s consideration of SB 1005, *Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission General Counsel and Powers of Local Planning Boards – Alterations*. The Prince George’s County Planning Board has not yet voted on a position for the bill.

The bill proposes a shocking reorganization of the Commission by chopping up most of its core administrative functions, creating a duplicative bureaucracy that would cost the taxpayers in the bi-county jurisdictions millions of dollars in the process. The agency’s CORPORATE departments include Legal, Human Resources, Finance, Corporate Policy, Risk Management and the Inspector General’s office that guards against fraud, waste and abuse. At a minimum, SB 1005 would create havoc within a national and local award-winning agency that has served the residents in Prince George’s County and our region with national distinction for nearly a century.

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The Commission currently operates with a business model that is designed to take excellent care of the operations in each county by leveraging specialized expertise. For example, a team of lawyers experienced in land use is assigned to each county planning staff, but they collaborate and cover for each other when staffing issues arise. Meanwhile, their supervision is coordinated and other bi-county (centralized) legal teams are specialized in construction contracts, human resources, litigation, etc. This hybrid model works exceptionally well and was praised by both the Prince George's and Montgomery County Councils in their joint study several years ago. Other Commission functions are organized in a comparable fashion – recruitment, information technology and a scandal-free procurement process, for example. It makes no sense to sever the functions as proposed by the bill. Duplicating them would be a huge step in the wrong direction that will result in nothing more than waste.

We also believe you must consider the best interest of more than 5,000 people who are currently depending on the Commission's unified pension system, including almost 2,000 retirees, beneficiaries or individuals who are disabled. Destroying the agency's cohesive structure that currently serves the entire agency will cost county taxpayers more money by disrupting the actuarial balance and fiduciary responsibilities that made the system successful to date.

In summary, SB 1005 represents a misguided attempt to fix something that isn't broken. We challenge you to identify another county government or agency in our region bestowed with more regional or national accolades or awards – awards in planning, parks and recreation, government budgeting, financial reporting, human resources as well as courtroom results. Please let us know. This 100-year-old agency has been a consistent nationwide leader supported by administrative teams with hard-working people who are dedicated to our mission and the people we serve.

Your constituents deserve an unfavorable vote on SB 1005.

Sincerely,

**Charles Dukes, Former Chair**  
**Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Former Chair**  
**Samuel J. Parker, Jr., Former Chair**  
**John W. Rhoads, Former Chair**  
**Dorothy F. Bailey, Former Vice-Chair**  
**Howard W. Stone, Jr., Former Vice Chair**  
**Sarah A. Cavitt, Former Member**  
**Jesse Clark, Former Member**  
**William M. Doerner, Former Member**  
**A. Shuanise Washington, Former Member**

cc: Members of the Prince George's and Montgomery County Delegations  
President, M-NCPPC Retirees Association