

February 27, 2026

SB687

Environment – Flood Risk Review Process – Establishment

Testimony by Winnie Carpenter, on behalf of Oella-Catonsville Flood Solutions

WE SUPPORT SB687

SECTION 1(5-803.1)(C)(1)(I) The cumulative impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development in the watershed must be addressed. Ellicott City, Baltimore and Howard Counties, have a well-documented history of flooding. The floodwater levels were documented on the arch near the B&O Museum in Old Ellicott City before recent floods destroyed them. (Exhibit 1, and 2-4 for historic flooding.)

SECTION 1(5-803.1)(C)(1)(II) Baltimore County approved additional paved area, for a redevelopment in a floodplain which will effect stormwater conveyance, storage, and infiltration capacity. (Exhibit 5)

SECTION 1(5-803.1)(C)(3) Baltimore and Howard County tributaries meet the Patapsco River at Ellicott City, where there is no gauge to incorporate data, regarding current and projected intensity, duration, and frequency. (Exhibit 6)

SECTION 1(5-803.1)(C)(3) USGS StreamStat findings confirm the likelihood of greater flooding from a nearly 300 square mile drainage basin which funnels into the historic mill town of Oella. (Exhibit 7)

SECTION 1(5-803.1)(C)(II) Land use and impervious surface change trend require identification by the Department of Planning and the Advancing Stormwater Resiliency in Maryland studies. In November 2023, the FEMA floodplain map removed a 190,000 square foot structure from the middle of the floodplain – this action needs to be investigated and corrected. (Exhibit 8)

SECTION 1(5-803)(C)(4)(II) Granting waivers for required Open Space would impair the effectiveness of watershed-scale flood management strategies developed under 5-803. Baltimore County waived the required 190,000 square foot Open Space to 12,000 square feet, with a payment to the county for \$40,000. (Exhibit 9)