

HB 328 (PGMC 105-26) - Ethics - Bi-County - OEA P

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Position: FAV



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Aisha N. Braveboy
County Executive

Todd M. Turner
Executive Director

POSITION STATEMENT

POSITION:

SUPPORT

HB 328 (PG/MC 105-26) Prince George's County House Delegation	Public Ethics – Bicounty Commissions – Financial Disclosure Statements
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HB 328 (PG/MC 105-26) seeks to clarify the requirements for submitting, maintaining, and making available to the public the financial disclosure statements (FDS) of members appointed to Bi-County Commissions from Prince George's County by adding the Prince George's County Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA).

Pursuant to current State law, appointees to Bi-County Commissions, including the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), and the Washington Suburban Transit Commission (WSTC), are required to file financial disclosure statements (FDS) with the State Ethics Commission (SEC) and a paper copy of their State FDS with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the County where the applicant is seeking appointment. State law requires the CAO to return the FDS for unsuccessful appointees, retain a copy of the FDS for the term of the commissioner, and make the FDS available for public inspection, subject to certain requirements.

The Prince George's County Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) was established by County law in 2012 to provide greater accountability and oversight of County government operations. In addition, OEA provides support to the County Board of Ethics, including the review and processing of County-required FDS-designated filers and providing public inspection, subject to both State and County law requirements. It should be noted that State law was not amended to include OEA's responsibility for handling FDSs in Prince George's County when it was created in 2012.

HB 328 (PG/MC 105-26) will make the FDS process uniform in Prince George's County by giving authority to OEA to handle Bi-County appointees' documents. Both the Prince George's and Montgomery County Delegations voted favorably with a technical amendment. For the foregoing reasons, the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) **SUPPORTS HB 328 (PG/MC 105-26)** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of this legislation.

Submitted: Office of Ethics and Accountability
April 2, 2026

Carr FWA EEE testimony on HB328 PG_MC 105-26.pdf

Uploaded by: Al Carr

Position: FWA

Carr - FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT testimony on HB328 PG/MC 105-26

March 31, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on House Bill 328 Bicounty Commissions – Public Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements PG/MC 105-26.

I wanted to flag for you two problems with bicounty financial disclosures that need to be addressed either with amendments to this bill or in a future bill:

- 1) The difficulty for members of the public to be able to inspect financial disclosure statements of bicounty commissioners
- 2) The convoluted process by which such disclosures are filed, stored and processed

Many Maryland public officials, including members of the General Assembly, file annual financial disclosure statements with the state ethics commission. Once upon a time, this process was burdensome because it was all done on paper. Members of the public who wanted to inspect a financial disclosure statement had to take off from work, or other duties, drive to the Annapolis office of the ethics commission during business hours, and request to inspect it in-person.

Fortunately, financial disclosure statements have gone electronic. Disclosures are filed electronically, stored electronically and can be inspected electronically. Less burdensome for all involved.

Carr - FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT testimony on HB328 PG/MC 105-26

But when we passed the law modernizing financial disclosures, there was an inadvertent omission: disclosures of bicounty commissioners, despite being filed and stored electronically at the ethics commission, can still only be inspected in-person, during business hours, at their Annapolis office.

This loophole can easily be fixed.

The second issue is the convoluted process for bicounty financial disclosures per the attached flow chart. A better process would be for the disclosures to be filed electronically with the state ethics commission and for other stakeholders to be given electronic access to the state ethics commission's records. That way the disclosures will be stored electronically, in a single place, with no more extraneous paper processes or confusion about which entity possesses the public record or handles public inspection.

Sincerely,

Al Carr

Financial Disclosure for Montgomery County Planning Board Applicants

