



February 23, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: OPPOSE -- HB 779 (Natural Resources – Riverine Siting and Design Criteria)**

Dear Chair Korman:

On behalf of the Maryland Municipal Stormwater Association (MAMSA), I am writing to **OPPOSE** HB 779, which would impose siting and design requirements for certain local capital projects that receive state funding and that are located in riverine areas of the State.

MAMSA is an association of the State's local governments and leading stormwater consultant firms who work for clean water and safe infrastructure based on sound science and good public policy. MAMSA Members operate municipal separate storm sewer systems that are often located near the State's rivers and their tributaries. Members also actively participate in stormwater management associated with the construction and reconstruction of municipal or county owned buildings that are for public use, like libraries, fire stations, and recreational facilities.

HB 779 would require that any future construction or reconstruction of any structures covered by the bill be done so that the structure can withstand flooding associated with a 500-year flooding event. Although MAMSA Members generally support resiliency in the design and construction of facilities, a mandatory requirement to do so for 500-year flooding events—**events with only a 0.2% chance of occurring in any given year**—would drive up local construction costs exponentially. Designing a building to withstand a 500-year event requires more than incremental upgrades. To meet this standard, local governments may have to elevate structures significantly higher than current regulations require, necessitating deeply driven structural foundations, and the installation of highly specialized, watertight utility, mechanical, and electrical systems.

Ultimately, these mandates would significantly increase the costs of necessary community projects. Localities would be forced to **ask their citizens and your constituents** to pay for this hyper resilient design mandate, diverting limited municipal funds away from high-impact, everyday stormwater and water-quality improvements. As representatives of local governments, MAMSA Members are very reluctant to ask our families and businesses to pay more for projects when they are already facing increasing inflation and other financial pressures.

For these reasons, MAMSA urges the Committee to vote **NO** on HB 779. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at [Lisa@AquaLaw.com](mailto:Lisa@AquaLaw.com) or 804-716-9021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa M. Ochsenhirt".

Lisa M. Ochsenhirt  
MAMSA Deputy General Counsel

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee Members, HB 779 Sponsors