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State Treasurer

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Testimony of the Maryland State Treasurer's Office

House Bill 1161: Board of Public Works - Contract Review - Climate and Sustainability Information (BPW Climate Transparency Act)

Position: Favorable with Amendments

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

March 10, 2026

As introduced, House Bill 1161 requires the State Treasurer's liaison to the Board of Public Works (BPW/Board), as well as the liaisons for the Governor and the Comptroller, to verify that specified climate and sustainability information appears on the Board's agenda items. While the State Treasurer's Office (STO) strongly supports enhancing the environment-related information that comes to the Board, requiring the liaisons to ensure compliance the law would constrain STO's limited resources and represent a change in the current practice. For the reasons discussed below, STO respectfully requests a favorable with amendments report on House Bill 1161.

Current Practice

BPW establishes requirements on a variety of topics, including the form and content of agenda items, via published advisories. The Board's staff typically ensure compliance with these requirements, as well as any applicable laws. STO's liaison, in turn, works with the other liaisons to advise the members on these matters. Requiring the liaisons to verify that agenda items contain certain information in compliance with requirements in the law would necessitate STO to redirect resources to implement the bill. This is because STO has only one full-time staff person, whose workload is at full capacity, dedicated to supporting Treasurer Davis as a member of the Board.

Amendment to Reflect Current Practice

The fiscal note indicates that "Given the technical and broad nature of the required information, agencies may need additional resources and staff familiar with the State's climate goals and sustainability initiatives." By extension, the liaisons to the Board would

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require some level of expertise to verify that the necessary information is included in each agenda item.

STO believes that the Board's direct staff, rather than the liaisons, are better suited to implement the new requirements. For the foregoing reasons, STO respectfully requests a favorable with amendments report on House Bill 1161. Please contact Laura Atas, Deputy Treasurer for Public Policy (latas@treasurer.state.md.us), with any questions.