

N. SCOTT PHILLIPS, Esq.
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County
—
Judiciary Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 319
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3358 · 301-858-3358
800-492-7122 Ext. 3358
N.Scott.Phillips@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

House Bill 1216 (F)

Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
Chair Melissa Wells
Vice Chair Kenneth Kerr
March 4, 2026

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee:

I am Delegate N. Scott Phillips representing the 10th Legislative District and I am requesting a favorable report for House Bill 1216.

HB 1216 makes an important but straightforward change to Maryland law. Currently, only certain named counties are authorized to honor certificates of guarantee issued by nonprofit contractor associations to satisfy county bond requirements for public improvements. This bill expands that authority to all counties in Maryland.

Importantly, the bill does not require any county to honor certificates of guarantee. It simply allows every county the option to do so, preserving full local discretion.

Bonding requirements serve a critical purpose. They protect taxpayers, ensure completion of public improvements, and safeguard county infrastructure investments. Certificates of guarantee provide an alternative mechanism that maintains those protections while expanding access for responsible contractors — particularly small and minority-owned firms that may face barriers in obtaining traditional surety bonds.

I previously introduced legislation to expand this tool to Baltimore County. That legislation passed, and the policy has worked as intended. There have been no adverse fiscal consequences, no erosion of public protections, and no disruption to county authority.

Having demonstrated that this approach is sound policy, we should not require counties to seek separate enabling legislation one jurisdiction at a time.

HB 1216 ensures parity across Maryland. Contractors in one county should not have access to lawful bonding alternatives while contractors in neighboring counties do not. Counties that wish to utilize this mechanism should be permitted to do so without delay.

This bill promotes fairness, supports small business participation in public works, enhances competition, and preserves local control.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1216.

Thank you for your consideration.

Delegate N. Scott Phillips