



**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1041**

Dear Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee:

American Flood Coalition (AFC) appreciates the opportunity to express its **support for HB 1041**, a bill that will keep campers in Maryland safer from flood disasters. AFC is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit coalition that drives transformational adaptation to protect communities from higher seas, stronger storms, and more frequent flooding. AFC comprises more than 500 local and state elected officials, municipalities, civic and military groups, and businesses that work together to advance flood solutions at the local, state, and federal levels.

Across the country, we have seen how important it is for states to establish design standards and codes to protect life and safety, and provide clear guidance to drive the adoption and implementation of effective risk reduction practices. We applaud the Maryland legislature for taking this important step to protect youth camps from disaster by ensuring that the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) considers flood risk when providing or renewing certificates for youth camps. It is critical that Maryland make informed decisions when protecting its residents, and especially young campers, from hazards. Through this bill, MDH will take the extra step in protecting children from flood risk by identifying whether or not camp housing structures are located in a 100-year flood hazard area.

With the passage of HB 1041, youth camps that currently have housing structures in the flood hazard area will need to make choices to reduce risk. Camps can move their structures horizontally, relocating the entire footprint of the cabin out of the floodplain. Alternatively, these camps may build vertically, elevating their structures above base flood elevation using stilts or dirt fill. It is important to note that with limited plumbing and electrical demands, camp cabins are typically easier to elevate than a traditional building or home.

In September, Texas passed [Heaven's 27 Camp Safety Act](#) to incorporate learnings from the 2025 Hill Country flooding into the youth camp licensing process. The act mandates new best practices, including requiring youth camps to renew their licenses annually and identify changes to boundaries, construction of new cabins, and renovations that impact housing capacity or building access. Maryland is moving in the right direction by considering similar licensing adjustments that ensure youth camps evaluate safe building design before receiving their certification. By creating intentional processes to consider such live-saving, forward-looking flood hazard data, Maryland can work to avoid losses in the future.

Combined with HB 937, a bill to establish a workgroup to study youth camp and RV park emergency preparedness, HB 1041 positions Maryland to be preemptive about children's safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this effort ensuring the safety of all those who enjoy Maryland's recreational opportunities.

Respectfully,

Gian Tavares
State Policy Director