



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: House Judiciary

DATE: February 18, 2026

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

BILL: House Bill 332

The Maryland Municipal League supports the intent behind House Bill 332, the No Kings Act, but has concerns with the bill as originally drafted. We understand and appreciate the broader objective the legislation seeks to advance, and our intent in raising these issues is simply to flag potential municipal impacts that we believe are unintended, and to continue the constructive dialogue we value with the bill's sponsors.

As drafted, the bill appears to apply to individual municipal employees acting under color of law in the ordinary course of their official duties. When paired with the bill's fee-shifting provisions, this represents a significant departure from the long-standing liability and indemnification framework under which local governments operate pursuant to the Maryland Tort Claims Act and the Local Government Tort Claims Act.

Those statutes provide a predictable and well-understood structure that municipalities rely on for risk management, insurance coverage, and personnel decision-making. Altering that framework, even unintentionally, could expose local governments to expanded categories of claims and litigation risk that were not previously contemplated.

Of particular concern is the potential for increased litigation costs. In addition to any damages exposure, municipalities could face substantial attorney's fees and expert witness costs under the bill's fee-shifting provisions. Because many local governments participate in insurance pools or maintain coverage that is closely calibrated to existing liability standards, these changes could have downstream effects on premiums or pool contributions, with direct budgetary consequences for local jurisdictions.

MML would be very supportive of an amendment that preserves existing Maryland Tort Claims Act and Local Government Tort Claims Act standards for local governments and their employees, while still allowing the bill to move forward consistent with its underlying intent. We believe this approach appropriately balances the policy goals of the legislation with the need to avoid unintended fiscal and operational impacts on municipalities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests the adoption of such an amendment. With that change, MML would be able to withdraw its concerns.

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

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