



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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HB 176 – State Department of Assessments and Taxation and Department of General Services - Property Appraisal Aids - Geographic Images

POSITION: Favorable
DATE: January 27, 20256
COMMITTEE: House Ways and Means Committee

Frederick County Government supports **HB 176 - State Department of Assessments and Taxation and Department of General Services - Property Appraisal Aids - Geographic Images**.

HB 176 aims to modernize, enhance, and standardize the property assessment process within Maryland by integrating geographic and photographic imagery for the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) and the Department of General Services (DGS). Ensuring that property assessments are accurate is essential for promoting fairness, transparency, and efficiency in taxation and community planning. This use of this technology will allow SDAT to be more accurate, responsive, and efficient, particularly with properties that are challenging to physically access.

Frederick County Government currently contracts and utilizes oblique imagery separate from SDAT. In some unique circumstances, such as warehouses with limited access points due to truck traffic, our team has been able to share images with SDAT to inform their assessments. Establishing a uniform system could help SDAT consistently determine property values without requiring physical onsite visits that can be costly, time-consuming, and labor-intensive. By removing the necessity of a physical onsite visit, this system could reduce SDAT costs and allow for their property assessment process to be streamlined.

The implementation of this bill will need to consider several factors to ensure that jurisdictions that already use oblique aerial photographic imagery are not negatively impacted by cost-share shifts, delays in information sharing, or administrative complications. Additionally, many jurisdictions, such as Frederick County, use oblique aerial photographic imagery to provide data to our emergency operations software utilized in our 911 call center. Ensuring that integration stays in place will be critical for County operations, services, and budgets, especially as counties already cover 90% of SDAT costs.

Oblique aerial photographic imagery will equip the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) with valuable visual data while reducing the need for assessors to enter private property. As with any legislation, a smooth implementation that incorporates feedback from local governments will be a crucial component to the success of this policy.

Frederick County: Rich History, Bright Future

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