



THE CITY OF BRUNSWICK MARYLAND

1 WEST POTOMAC STREET · BRUNSWICK, MARYLAND 21716 · (301) 834-7500

COMMITTEE: House Ways and Means

BILL: **HB 1142** – Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Structures

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Wilkins and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Brunswick, I am writing to express our strong support for **HB 1142**.

Our municipality, like many of the 157 cities and towns across Maryland, is operating under a revenue framework that has not been substantially modernized in nearly 60 years. Currently, property taxes account for approximately 46% of our general fund. While we take pride in providing essential services—from protecting our community through our police department to our Utilities department's commitment to provide clean, safe drinking water—this heavy reliance on a single, slow-growing revenue source is no longer sustainable in a modern economy.

HB 1142 is a common-sense, "study-first" approach. By establishing a blue-ribbon task force, the State can finally evaluate how we can:

- **Relieve the Burden on Homeowners:** By identifying alternative revenue streams, we can move away from the "one-lever" system that forces us to raise property taxes to meet rising costs.
- **Reflect a Modern Economy:** Our current tools were built for a mid-20th-century economy. We need a system that captures the value of our modern, service-based and visitor-driven economies.
- **Ensure Local Resilience:** Diversified revenue makes local governments more resilient to economic shifts, ensuring that municipal services remain stable even when the housing market fluctuates.

In Brunswick, we are currently facing the challenge of balancing growth and the need for housing against our ability to continue to provide the level of service our community needs and deserves. While growth will eventually help our tax base, basic infrastructure was be in place or expanded to attract interest from developers. Additionally, rising costs make infrastructure maintenance like water mains, sewer mains, roads and sidewalks impossible to keep up with. Without modern revenue tools, our only option is to look back to our existing property owners for additional funding. This task force is the necessary first step toward giving us the flexibility we need to keep our community affordable and vibrant.

We respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB 1142**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nathan Brown", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Nathan Brown

Mayor