



House Bill 428

Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program – Awards for Flood Damage and Mandatory Funding

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: March 27, 2019

From: Robin Clark Eilenberg

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 428. This bill would require an annual \$5M appropriation to the comprehensive flood management grant program. It also extends the list of eligible purposes for the program to include debris removal and emergency protection work associated with a flood event. It would allow counties and municipalities that have incurred more than \$1M in flood damage since 2009 to receive grant funding, and it prioritizes grant funding consideration for damage to historic districts and/or localities that have experienced more than one flood in the past five years.

Major flood events are by their nature difficult to anticipate. Maryland counties support flood mitigation, response, and recovery efforts through many county departments, working in coordination with local emergency management offices. County governments seek to reduce flood risks and prepare for flood events with all available resources, including federal funding. Catastrophic or repeated flooding events, however, easily overwhelm available local and federal resources.

This legislation's update to the State's comprehensive flood management grant program extends the program's reach to encompass serious flooding events such as those we have seen in Maryland recently, while still maintaining the traditional purposes of the grant program. This balance will deliver much needed support to those jurisdictions that are still recovering from severe flooding events, and then, in future years, provide opportunities to other jurisdictions for flood control and watershed management projects.

To support critical flood response and recovery efforts and continue flood prevention across all counties, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 428 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.