



BILL NO.: House Bill 932

TITLE: Department of Planning – State Development Plan – Denial of Projects, Permits, Approvals, or State Funding

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 8, 2012

COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters

CONTACT: Leslie Knapp Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 932. The bill would clarify the scope and limits of the State Development Plan (aka PlanMaryland), in accordance with statements made by the Plan’s creators. HB 932 provides that the Plan may not be used to establish a new cause for the State denial of projects, permits, or approvals, or deny mandated funding.

From its earliest official correspondence regarding PlanMaryland, MACo has been “cautiously supportive” of the Plan.¹ However, MACo has also expressed concern about the Plan’s potential scope and breadth. Both Governor Martin O’Malley and Secretary of Planning Richard Hall have stated publicly that the Plan is about coordinating State resources and funding. However, MACo believes the final version of the Plan could eventually be expanded to become a litmus test for State permits and approvals. Hence, MACo supports statutory language that more clearly defines the stated purpose of the Plan.

HB 932 does not repeal or alter the major provisions of the Plan. Instead, the bill better defines the Plan’s scope and role, providing county governments with a level of comfort that is lacking with the current version of the Plan. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 932.

¹ MACo letter to MDP Secretary Richard Hall, August 9, 2010.