



Senate Bill 68

Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Establishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs and Budget and Taxation Committees

Date: January 28, 2021

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) SUPPORTS SB 68. By designating the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) as a forward-facing, Cabinet-level entity, this bill would bolster and enhance collaboration, communication, and coordination between the State and county governments in times of crisis.

Emergency management is a year-round process, a constant loop of preparation, training, testing, and revision that strengthens community preparedness and resilience. A strong partnership among state and local partners is vital to emergency preparedness and response.

COVID-19 has underscored the importance of a strong, well-defined, and seamless intergovernmental emergency management system. The necessary preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery must be a rigorous and coordinated intergovernmental, interagency, and interdisciplinary effort with regards to planning, training, exercising, technology, and standards.

As a Cabinet-level entity, MEMA will be in a strong position to work directly with county emergency management offices to develop scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts and to better align key roles and responsibilities when disasters strike. This partnership will ensure the continuity of government in the face of an innumerable number of catastrophic events.

SB 68 would strengthen and streamline collaboration in planning, response, and recovery efforts. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 68.