



Senate Bill 164

Maryland Department of Health – Capital and Grant Programs – State Grants

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: February 27, 2019

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 164 as it boosts a grant program that helps counties fund capital projects for behavioral health and developmental disability facilities.

Counties have a duty to protect and promote the health and well-being of their communities. To advance those goals, they offer a range of public health services through their local health departments or community organization partnerships. Accordingly, they have an interest in ensuring their residents have adequate access to addiction, mental health, and developmental disability programs in high quality facilities.

SB 164 supports county efforts to provide access to these resources by increasing the portion of state capital grant funds that may be awarded to counties for the construction, acquisition, renovation, and equipping of addiction, mental health, and developmental disability facilities. The bill raises the state grant cap from 50% to 75% of the eligible cost and raises the cap for poverty area funding from 75% to 90% of the eligible cost remaining after the federal grant has been applied. Eligible local capital projects would benefit from stronger state funding.

The grant program also leverages federal and local resources and provides extra support in high poverty areas. State funds may cover up to 50% of eligible costs after all federal grants are applied and up to 75% of eligible costs for projects in areas of high poverty. Counties are able to use community development block funds as local matching funds.

SB 164 improves the state's Community Mental Health, Addiction and Developmental Disabilities Facilities Capital Program by increasing the portion of state funds a county may receive for eligible projects. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 164.