

Timestamp	First name	Last name	City	State	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	If no, what organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachments
Bill No. 29-25											
2025-05-19 10:58:00	James	Suchoski	Harwood	MD	20776	Yes		Bill No. 29-25 (As Amended): AN ORDINANCE concerning: Construction Property and Maintenance Codes – Codes and Supplements – Zoning – Conditional Uses – Large Animal Veterinarian Clinic	Support	There is an undeniable necessity for an equine surgical hospital in Anne Arundel County. Horse owners in and around Anne Arundel County currently have only two options for emergency equine surgical care, and both of those options are a minimum of one- and one-half hour drive from here. The odds of a sick or injured horse surviving the trip to either New Bolton, PA or Leesburg, VA are not good, and the odds of surviving an emergency surgery after that long trip are even worse. With Anne Arundel County having such a large population of horses, especially performance horses, we truly need to have an equine surgical hospital located here. Changing the building code in RA zoned areas will make this possible!	
Bill No. 32-25											
2025-05-12 9:34:21	Russell	Good	Annapolis	MD	21401	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	Another Tax grab. While building bike paths and other non essential projects and taxing SCBD communities that are fiscally responsible in criminal	
2025-05-15 10:50:11	Stephanie	Hall	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	As a resident for over 10 years in Annapolis Roads, a special tax district, I oppose this legislation. We are a well run and organized community and do not need nor will we benefit from more government interference. As a voting citizen I absolutely do NOT want to be further taxed without my community receiving any benefit from it. This bill has been proposed and failed before and I hope that is the same outcome once again.	
2025-05-15 12:06:46	Jim	Fitzgerald	Sherwood Forest	Md	21405	No	Sherwood Forest	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	See attached file.	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/56985/sherwood-forest-scbd-county-council-presentation-051925.docx
2025-05-16 8:41:11	Alex	McCrary	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	This legislation should be either withdrawn or rejected. See attached letter.	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57071/bill-32-25-vote-to-reject-this-bad-legislation.pdf
2025-05-16 10:26:10	Anastasia	Hopkinson	Annapolis	MD	21403	No	Annapolis Neck F	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>The Annapolis Neck Peninsula Federation respectfully presents our communities' concerns about the proposed Bill 32-25, attached. ANPF represents many communities who are tax districts. We have closely studied the bill and OPPOSE it.</p> <p>We view this bill as akin to cracking open an egg with a hammer. Its provisions would discourage volunteerism and community spirit for reasons cited in the attachment. It adds costs to community administration and the threat of severe punishments. It invites public intrusion into community affairs. And, perversely, it may further burden the County with oversight. What communities truly need are means and methods to improve communication with their members.</p> <p>ANPF offers to assist in organizing a workgroup composed of community leaders to evaluate any issues of transparency, accountability and communication.</p> <p>Thank you for your many efforts to improve our communities.</p>	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57084/bill-32-25-community-concerns-anpf.docx

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2025-05-16 11:52:21	Karen	Boyd	Edgewater	Maryland	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>With no information on what the cost is to the County to administer SCBD, SECD, WID versus administrative charge collected, how does the County justify the proposed five-fold increase to the maximum Admin Charge?</p> <p>The \$10,000 proposed max Admin Charge is not realistic. A five-fold increase in one year is very large. There are no data to back up this proposed increase. The County should undertake an analysis of the history of these Districts County expenses to administer these Districts. Additionally, the number to start out probably should be lower. Maybe \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000. Using \$10,000 as a starting place makes for an accelerated annual increase in the max number. A lower starting number will result in a smaller change each year and be less shocking with each annual change.</p> <p>Basing increases on the CPI may not be the best reflection of the County's increase of maximum Admin Charge to these Districts. Such changes should be based on the cost to the County to administer these Districts. And yes, the Districts that "do not receive and manage disbursements of funds" should pay more.</p> <p>The County still must collect these Districts' tax regardless of the total tax amount.</p> <p>Seems the greater cost to the County is to get these Districts' tax information together to enter on each property tax bill. This action requires more effort in communities where there are more tax accounts even if a smaller tax amount is collected by the County, than for a community with fewer tax accounts but a higher tax amount collected by the County. For example, a SCBD with 369 tax accounts, a SCBD tax amount of \$18,450 and a 5% Admin charge of \$922.50 will take greater effort to process than to process a SCBD with 57 tax accounts, a tax of \$42,750 and a 5% Admin charge of \$2,137.50. Processing of budget requests, preparing (three) disbursement checks, annual auditing and fiscal year completion wrap-up reporting seems pretty much the same effort for each District, regardless of the size of tax amount. A flat charge per District or a charge based on number of tax accounts in each District seems more equitable. Future changes, based on such an Admin Charge, would better reflect changes in the CPI than that based on changes on the self-tax each District may increase or decrease with each budget cycle.</p> <p>The wording in the Administrative Charge section (3) and in the Fiscal Note is ambiguous. There is a difference between Annual CPI (currently 324.513) and the percent annual change in the CPI (currently 3.0%).</p> <p>1.Is the increase in max Admin Charge by the annual CPI or by the percent change in the CPI?</p> <p>2.Is there a January overall CPI recorded and reported for the Baltimore area? I could not easily find one. There's a Dec. and a Feb. overall CPI but not for Jan.</p>	

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2025-05-16 19:56:19	William	Boyd	Edgewater	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>Thank you for your work to make our County a better place.</p> <p>I highly recommend NOT approving this proposal as introduced.</p> <p>Proposed 32-25 is an interesting work that's needs more background basis for changing existing ordinances and further considering its organization vis-à-vis our existing County ordinances.</p> <p>At a minimum, I suggest removing 32-25 from immediate consideration to provide time to consider amendments and reorganization, and further study.</p> <p>Many community associations that manage these districts are administered by a dedicated group of volunteers. These proposed requirements will reduce our "pool" of volunteers due to those who will choose to not participate due to increased required management actions.</p> <p>Detailed comments:</p> <p>Admin Charge –</p> <p>There are no data to justify a large change in the Admin Charge – both for the percent charge to Districts that do not administer disbursements and to the Max Admin Charge. Nomenclature needs to be clarified i.e. CPI usage.</p> <p>Instead of Admin Charge based on Tax Amount, Admin Charge should be a flat fee or based on the number of tax accounts. The number of Tax Accounts in each District drives the greatest variable of County admin effort (cost) amongst Districts in administering this program. As presently arranged, a district with a greater number of tax accounts but a lower tax collected has a lower admin charge than a district with fewer tax accounts but a higher tax collected amount. For example, a SCBD with 369 tax accounts, a SCBD tax amount of \$18,450 and a 5% Admin charge of \$922.50 will take greater effort to process (each property tax bill), than to process a SCBD with 57 tax accounts, a tax of \$42,750 and a 5% Admin charge of \$2,137.50. Changes in a flat fee or number of accounts is more relatable to the CPI, than a community self-tax which may increase or decrease as a community decides each Budget cycle.</p> <p>Contact Info – does not address how this is to be adjudged and enforced. It is fruitful for abuse. We've all been taken aback by the immediate, automated, non-responsive email response. Is an automated response a valid "response" that meets this proposed requirement?</p> <p>Penalties – Who, how adjudges non-compliance? Who, how decides which penalty type?</p> <p>Dissolution – current ordinances address dissolution and abolition in separate sections of TITLE 7. SPECIAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT DISTRICTS, SHORE EROSION CONTROL DISTRICTS, AND WATERWAYS IMPROVEMENTS DISTRICTS. Proposed 32-25 appears to combine? How will this apply?</p> <p>General Provisions – HOA and Open Meetings Acts – proposed reads that only Special Community Benefit Districts are to comport with parts of these MD Acts. Sections (D)(1) and (D)(2) are unreasonable requirements for volunteer organizations.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	

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2025-05-17 11:55:48	Susan	Reinhart	annnapolis	MARYLAND	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Support	<p>Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Council,</p> <p>I am writing to express my support for Bill 32-25, which aims to enhance transparency and accountability within Special Community Benefit Districts (SCBDs) in Anne Arundel County.</p> <p>As a homeowner, Owner of a Real Estate team, and Associate Broker, I have observed firsthand the disparities between SCBDs and Homeowners Associations (HOAs) regarding governance and homeowner rights.</p> <p>SCBDs, while collecting mandatory fees from residents for community maintenance and improvements, often operate without the same level of transparency and homeowner engagement mandated for HOAs.</p> <p>The Maryland Homeowners Association Act states purchasers in HOA-governed communities have the right to review governing documents, including bylaws, prior to closing, and can rescind their contract within five days if they find the terms unacceptable. This critical consumer protection does not extend to SCBDs, leaving buyers uninformed about the rules and obligations associated with their prospective community. I know the bill is not mandating communities share information to potential buyers, but this bill provides a lot more transparency/trust for a homeowner.</p> <p>Moreover, many residents are unaware of the operational procedures of SCBDs, assuming that the absence of an HOA equates to a lack of governance or restrictions. This misconception can lead to confusion and frustration when residents discover post-purchase that their community is subject to regulations.</p> <p>Bill 32-25 addresses these issues by requiring SCBDs to:</p> <p>Comply with the Maryland Open Meetings Act, ensuring that meetings are open to the public, with proper notice and accessible minutes.</p> <p>Adhere to certain provisions of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act, promoting transparency in operations and decision-making.</p> <p>Designate at least one officer to complete training on the Open Meetings Act, fostering informed and compliant leadership within SCBDs.</p> <p>Implementing these measures will align SCBDs more closely with HOAs in terms of transparency and homeowner rights, fostering trust and informed participation among residents.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I respectfully ask you to vote in favor of Bill 32-25 to promote fairness, transparency, and accountability in all communities within our county.</p> <p>Sincerely, Susan Reinhart</p>	
2025-05-17 13:56:55	Kimberlee	Shaffir	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Support	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I live in Hillsmere and am concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability regarding our board. Agendas only recently began to be shared prior to meetings. It took several months for them to post meeting minutes within this past year. They refuse to record meetings and have closed sessions each board meeting with no notice as to the reason for the closed sessions. I believe that requiring operating under the Open Meetings Act (OPA) would go a long way to remedy some of these issues.</p> <p>While our HSIA currently operates above board in regards to finances, what occurred in Oyster Harbor is very concerning and I feel this bill should be past to ensure a similar situation doesn't occur in other SCBDs.</p>	

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2025-05-17 15:47:29	NICK	KYRIACOU	ANNAPOLIS	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Support	<p>Subject of Concern is the Board of Directors for the Hillsmere Shores Improvement Association</p> <p>I think the main thing I want to emphasize here is the lack of transparency, I feel as a member of Hillsmeres Shores since 1983 and the inability of the Board of Directors to have accountability. I believe that requiring operating under the Open Meetings Act (OPA) would go a long way to remedy the issue. This would restore common sense accountability to the Hillsmere Shores Community, going forward.</p> <p>It is equally important to talk about the abuse of the "closed executive. sessions." There are very strict guidelines when a board can go into executive session and none of those are being followed by the Board of Hillsmere Shores Improvement Association.</p> <p>I recommend all board members have a designated email address for the office they are elected into.</p>	
2025-05-18 18:35:43	Pam	Foster	Shady Side	MD	20764	No	Cedarhurst Citizens	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose		https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57226/cedarhurst-online-testimony-opposition-to-bill-32-25.pdf
2025-05-18 21:33:56	Clifford	Meiselbach	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>I have been on a number of boards during my career, and I recently joined the Board of my SCBD because I thought it was a well-managed volunteer operation. My skill set was needed to backfill a retiring board member. Our contact info is already published on our website and is frequently used by the community.</p> <p>Our SCBD holds 10-12 pre-announced board meetings per year open to all members via Zoom. The first agenda item is always "community comments". Minutes are published on our members-only website after each meeting. I would not want to be forced to allow non-member general public attendees. I have no problem with the idea of Open Meeting Act training but could not find it anywhere on the county website.</p> <p>The penalties proposed in this legislation are potentially onerous and lack any definition of how and when they could be implemented and in what proportion to the alleged offense and without definition of a specific redress process.</p> <p>I am also opposed to a large fee increase by the county without supporting evidence being published how much the county is spending to support the SCBDs. A 5X increase seems much too high. Why not just implement an annual inflation adjustment on the existing fee structure?</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	
2025-05-18 22:30:43	Tom	Knoll	Churchton	MD	20733	No	Franklin Manor C	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose		https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57235/testimony-bill-32-25.pdf
2025-05-19 8:54:40	Anthony	Bonacci	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>This is yet another ridiculous attempt to restructure SCBD's to further the personal agenda of a few rogue residents in Hillsmere, and Ms. Rodvein is acting unethically, collaborating in secret private social media groups and meetings, and going to far as to make negative comments toward and about her constituents. For years this has been a "coup" attempt to overturn bylaws and a board who would not allow these rogue residents to break rules and guidelines of our community (Hillsmere). We have screen grabs of comments by Rodvein specifically collaborating with these individuals. This bill is an attempt to CREATE a problem, then assess additional fees and taxes on residents of these communities to fund additional rules and oversight that is unnecessary. It has failed to pass twice before and should ABSOLUTELY fail again. I also believe Ms. Rodvien's actions with these groups and individuals should be looked at internally for ethical violations and improper use of her office.</p>	
2025-05-19 9:37:20	Christopher	Morris	Edgewater	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>This bill needs more refinements as it will adversely affect smaller SBCE's, specifically Shoreham Beach, the district where my family resides. A large increase to our community's meager budget to cover the county's administrative costs is not the answer. More effort need to be directed towards Proposed Bill 32-25 and it's related fee increase to SBCE's.</p>	
2025-05-19 9:41:26	James	Foster	Shady Side	MD	20764	No	Cedarhurst Citizens	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose		https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57251/online-testimony-opposition-to-bill-32-25.pdf
2025-05-19 9:43:01	Kierstan	Boyd	Annapolis	MD	21403	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Support	<p>It is vital that legislation be passed that requires HOAs and SCBDs to have open, transparent meetings. Too many communities are struggling with rogue and dictatorial Boards and residents have no recourse or full awareness of behind-the-scenes meetings.</p>	
2025-05-19 9:52:56	Cindy	Hall	Arnold	MD	21012	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>Please read attached letter.</p>	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57256/bill-32-25-opposition.doc

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2025-05-19 9:52:53	Nick	Kiley	Annapolis	MD	21403	No	Annapolis Roads	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>The Annapolis Roads Property Owners Association (ARPOA) Board of Directors has voted unanimously to oppose the bill as written. We are strongly against our private meetings having to be open to the public as our business is that of the community and outside observers, including lawyers and press, is unnecessary. Applying the Open Meetings Act to community-run organizations is a bridge too far. We are also against additional fees without justification, none of which has been provided, including a financial audit showing the county's increased burden.</p> <p>The penalties for non-compliance leave room for abuse and impose severe penalties on a community. These are volunteer run Boards and the workload is already burdensome at times, without having to worry about outside influence and the threat of financial and punitive hardship.</p> <p>Nick Kiley, President, Annapolis Roads Property Owners Association (ARPOA)</p>	
2025-05-19 10:23:25	TERRY	PROSSER	Deale	MD	20751-0309	No	Mason's Beach C	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>Please do not enact this bill. As written the provisions would be extremely difficult for small SCBDs such as Mason's Beach (Deale, MD). Public meetings for private communities are not going to reduce fraud but will overwhelm our small community. We meet in homes and at picnics. I believe this legislation, well-intentioned, should be reconsidered and if something is to be done, it be enacted with due consideration for the preservation of our taxes for the benefit of our community. Respectfully, Terry Prosser, President Mason's Beach Citizens Assn.</p>	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57258/letter-on-proposed-scbd-legislation-may-2025.pdf
2025-05-19 10:30:50	Michel	Bouchard	Edgewater	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>As an active member of the Selby on the Bay Community Association (SCA), and having served on the board in multiple positions over the years I strongly oppose a number of the provisions in this bill.</p> <p>Fees: That said, I realize that there is overhead for the county for accounting and oversight of special tax districts. The current administrative fee is 5% annually with a cap of \$2000, if that is insufficient then maybe raise the cap a reasonable amount (\$3000, that's a 50% increase). Special Tax districts alleviate duties from the county, they should not become sources of revenue. In Selby the SCA is a volunteer organization and our community has a mix of income levels. Having lived in Selby since 2005, the SCA has been successful in building a community center, multiple erosion control efforts, and managing the community beach assets. All of this while keeping the annual resident special tax fees reasonable (\$140.00 per property). We count on the Special Tax funds and have been successful in our execution and oversite.</p> <p>Additional Requirements: As volunteer board members, our plates are full maintaining the status quo under the existing system. Contact information: Like everyone see's on the daily news, privacy is no longer respected. Requiring volunteer board members to provide personal emails, or create and manage alias email addresses (as well as the 5 day response requirement) simply adds work for us. If the county sees the need for this additional overhead, then they should add an exclusion for volunteer organizations.</p> <p>Training and Compliance: Paid boards that have staff may be able to maintain these requirements, but this adds unnecessary hardship for a volunteer operation. I have no problem with compliance of the statutes, but they should be clear with a channel for discussions with the county should there be an issue. In an era of tight budgets, adding bureaucracy is not helping anyone. Our special tax district is working smoothly, we follow the Maryland Open Meetings Act laws.</p> <p>If it's not broken why add additional protocol and regulations? If there are issues, deal with them as needed.</p> <p>Vlr Mike Bouchard</p>	

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2025-05-19 10:35:42	Valerie	Kolmaister	Edgewater	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>I highly recommend NOT approving this proposal as introduced.</p> <p>Proposed 32-25 is an interesting work that's needs more background basis for changing existing ordinances and further considering its organization vis-à-vis our existing County ordinances.</p> <p>At a minimum, I suggest removing 32-25 from immediate consideration to provide time to consider amendments and reorganization, and further study.</p> <p>Many community associations that manage these districts are administered by a dedicated group of volunteers. These proposed requirements will reduce our "pool" of volunteers due to those who will choose to not participate due to increased required management actions.</p> <p>Detailed comments:</p> <p>Admin Charge –</p> <p>There are no data to justify a large change in the Admin Charge – both for the percent charge to Districts that do not administer disbursements and to the Max Admin Charge. Nomenclature needs to be clarified i.e. CPI usage.</p> <p>Instead of Admin Charge based on Tax Amount, Admin Charge should be a flat fee or based on the number of tax accounts. The number of Tax Accounts in each District drives the greatest variable of County admin effort (cost) amongst Districts in administering this program. As presently arranged, a district with a greater number of tax accounts but a lower tax collected has a lower admin charge than a district with fewer tax accounts but a higher tax collected amount. For example, a SCBD with 369 tax accounts, a SCBD tax amount of \$18,450 and a 5% Admin charge of \$922.50 will take greater effort to process (each property tax bill), than to process a SCBD with 57 tax accounts, a tax of \$42,750 and a 5% Admin charge of \$2,137.50. Changes in a flat fee or number of accounts is more relatable to the CPI, than a community self-tax which may increase or decrease as a community decides each Budget cycle.</p> <p>Contact Info – does not address how this is to be adjudged and enforced. It is fruitful for abuse. We've all been taken aback by the immediate, automated, non-responsive email response. Is an automated response a valid "response" that meets this proposed requirement?</p> <p>Penalties – Who, how adjudges non-compliance? Who, how decides which penalty type?</p> <p>Dissolution – current ordinances address dissolution and abolition in separate sections of TITLE 7. SPECIAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT DISTRICTS, SHORE EROSION CONTROL DISTRICTS, AND WATERWAYS IMPROVEMENTS DISTRICTS. Proposed 32-25 appears to combine? How will this apply?</p> <p>General Provisions – HOA and Open Meetings Acts – proposed reads that only Special Community Benefit Districts are to comport with parts of these MD Acts. Sections (D)(1) and (D)(2) are unreasonable requirements for volunteer organizations.</p> <p>I strongly feel that until the above issues, concerns and questions are further researched and addressed, that Bill 32-25 should be withdrawn form consideration at this time.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	
2025-05-19 10:39:30	Charles	Gassert	SHADY SIDE	MD	20764	No	Snug Harbor Cor	Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>Snug Harbor Opposes the bill as drafted. SHCA is a less than a 100 home community impacted by all three special community districts and is located between two saltwater marsh's and a maria/bayfront waterway. This bill proposal would directly impact Snug Harbor by increasing the amount of tax liability associated with administrative charges proposed in this bill. While we concur with the provisions of increased oversight requirements, my community does not concur with the proposed tax increases and we propose changes to the tax rate structure to better accommodate a small community and the per home impact over larger communities.</p> <p>1. Special consideration should be taken due to size of the community</p> <p>2. Smaller districts should be pro-rated and Cap proposals should be considerably less than the recommendations.</p> <p>3. Comparing Snug Harbor to our next store neighbor we are at 100 home to 400 home disadvantage or 4 to 1 in per household impacts on the tax base. Meaning smaller communities will pay more per household if all the across the board recommendations are adopted, and not "right sized" to the community.</p> <p>Very Respectfully, Charles Gassert, President SHCA, representing the residents of Snug Harbor</p>	

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2025-05-19 10:42:04	Ira	Kolmaister	edgewater	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose		
2025-05-19 10:45:16	Sara	Arthur	Annapolis	MD	21401	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose		https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57266/aa-bill-32-25-statement-by-sara-h-arthur.pdf
2025-05-19 10:56:59	Michael	Lofton	Harwood	Maryland	20776	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	See attached	https://www.aacounty.org/system/files/webform/cc_legislative_testimony/57272/loftontestimony-32-25scbd.docx
2025-05-19 10:56:08	Lynn	Howard	EDGEWATER	MD	21037	Yes		Bill No. 32-25: AN ORDINANCE concerning: Finance, Taxation, and Budget	Oppose	<p>I highly recommend NOT approving this proposal as introduced.</p> <p>I suggest removing 32-25 from immediate consideration to provide time to consider amendments and reorganization, and further study. A one size fits all “fix” to both the fiscal issues and the communications issues is not appropriate as each district has a wide variety of different purposes. The HOA requirements are onerous at best for volunteers. In some cases, what is being proposed would require a rewriting (and voting on) of bylaws for the association to be able to comply.</p> <p>Many, if not all of the community associations that manage these districts are administered by a dedicated group of unpaid volunteers. These proposed requirements will reduce our “pool” of volunteers due to those who will choose to not participate due to increased required management actions.</p> <p>While increasing fees to cover county costs may need to occur, more thought needs to be given to how that will impact the communities involved. And if the county believes it is in the county’s interest to relieve itself of these types of districts, the Council should consider the increased costs (road maintenance, etc) that will be incurred if the districts are dissolved.</p>	



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

32-25 email to share

Shannon Leadbetter <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>

Mon, May 19, 2025 at 11:01 AM

To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Kaley - Mr. Gassert submitted the below content just to me, but would like all Council Members to review his comments on behalf of Snug Harbor.

For the record, his email is [REDACTED]

Councilmember Leadbetter,

We appreciate the Legislative Update. I am forwarding our response as President of Snug Harbor Citizens Association (SHCA):

We Oppose Bill 32-25 for the following reasons.

Snug Harbor Opposes the bill as drafted. SHCA is a less than a 100 home community impacted by all three special community districts and is located between two saltwater marshes and a maria/bayfront waterway. This bill proposal would directly impact Snug Harbor by increasing the amount of tax liability associated with administrative charges proposed in this bill. While we concur with the provisions of increased oversight requirements, my community does not concur with the proposed tax increases and we recommend changes for consideration into the tax rate structure to better accommodate a small community and the per home impact over larger communities.

1. Special consideration should be taken due to size of the community
2. Smaller districts should be prorated and cap proposals should be considerably less than the recommendations.
3. Comparing Snug Harbor to our next store neighbor we are at 400 home to 100 home disadvantage or 4 to 1 in per household impacts on the tax base. Meaning smaller communities will pay more per household if all "the across the board" recommendations are adopted, and not "right sized" to the community.

Very Respectfully, Charles Gassert, President SHCA, representing the residents of Snug Harbor

Shannon Leadbetter
County Councilwoman
District 7
410.222.2417

Subscribe to the District 7 Newsletter: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/dPd7mSX/d7newsletter>

Please note my aide's contact information: Jessica Ewing, jewing@aacounty.org

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Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Bill 32-25 Testimony

MBCA Officers [REDACTED]

Mon, May 12, 2025 at 1:18 PM

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

Cc: [REDACTED]

Good afternoon Ms. Rodvien,

I am the new President of Manhattan Beach Civic Association, an SCBD in Severna Park. I am writing to share my concerns with your proposed Bill 32-25.

My specific concerns are as follows:

- 1) This would result in a 235% increase in our annual administrative costs to the county. Unlike an HOA which collects significantly more money and on a monthly basis, our SCBD only collects \$150 per year. Our ByLaws have a cap on the amount we can collect which is set at \$150 and we would need a 2/3 majority vote to change that. We will likely never get 2/3 of the community to vote for an increase to the cap. (We get less than 5% attendance at our Board and General meetings) These additional administrative fees will directly impact our ability to server our community.
- 2) We must allow members of the general public including the press, attorneys, and anyone a member would like to invite to attend. What would be the benefit to the community to allow attendance by the press, or those who do not live in Manhattan Beach or have any vested interest in it?
- 3) Introduction of harsh penalties for non-compliance: As a 100% volunteer organization that struggles to recruit board members or engage community members, the opportunity for unintended non-compliance is a real concern. The penalties are serious as the actions or inaction of 1 volunteer, even if unintentional, could result in the loss of funds, or dissolution of the SCBD which would have a significant impact on the community membership.

For over 50 years, the Manhattan Beach Civic Association has proudly operated with openness and transparency. All of our regular meetings and board meetings are open to the community, and we have worked hard to make sure members have access to information and opportunities to participate. With the exception of one ongoing legal matter—where, on the advice of legal counsel, the Board met privately to preserve attorney-client privilege—our commitment to openness has never wavered.

We are not opposed to the principle of openness itself. In fact, many of us welcome the idea of continued learning and would be glad to participate in training on transparency and open meetings. We recognize that trust in community leadership is built through openness, something we have practiced for decades.

In short, while we may differ on the implementation details of this legislation, we fully support the values of transparency and community participation. We remain committed to those principles—bill or no bill—just as we have for the last 50 years.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dustin
President
Manhattan Beach Civic Association

[REDACTED]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: fee increase for special tax districts

Lisa Rodvien <ccrodv33@aacounty.org>
Reply-To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org
To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Wed, May 14, 2025 at 12:29 PM

Hello Kaley,

Here is another SCBD email to share with the rest of the council and admin.

Sincerely,

Lisa Rodvien, District 6 Councilmember

Anne Arundel County Council

P.O. Box 2700

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-222-1401

lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

(she/her/hers)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dave bastian** [REDACTED]

Date: Fri, May 9, 2025 at 11:58 AM

Subject: fee increase for special tax districts

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org <lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org>

I live in Annapolis Roads and **support** your legislation. The Annapolis Roads Property Association Board will oppose it because they will lose transparency and a bending of tax spending on pet issues. I could go in detail but won't waste your time. Besides, the oversight tax is only about \$23 per household (\$8,000 increase from \$2,000 divided by 350 properties.

While there are monthly meetings, they are Zoom meetings (not in person) with only a general list of topics before the meeting with no indication of what the topics involve. Thus nobody attends. Minutes are available only months later along with little information on expenditures. There is no survey of what the community wants and the annual budget is too general with no specifics of basis of costs.

They complain about being volunteers but fight any anybody that wants to run for office who isn't on their hand-picked slate.

Dave Bastian
[REDACTED]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: FW: Bill 32-25

Shannon Leadbetter <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>
To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Thu, May 15, 2025 at 2:48 PM

Can you please share?

Jess

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Town Manager** <townmanager@croftontownhall.org>
Date: Fri, May 2, 2025 at 12:01 PM
Subject: FW: Bill 32-25
To: Shannon Leadbetter (sleadbetter@aacounty.org) <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>

From: Town Manager
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 4:42 PM
To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Bill 32-25

Hello Lisa-

Last we discussed your previous version of this legislation (Bill 100-24), it was my understanding that you were going to research the actual costs associated with the county's processing of SCBD budgets to provide a rational explanation for this significant administrative charge increase. Were you able to do that? As I mentioned when we spoke, it would be a far easier "sell" to our residents to have quantifying data to support the argument that the Crofton SCBD has been underpaying for years rather than hitting them with a random 400% increase without proof.

As stated previously, we have no issue with the open meetings requirement as that has been our practice since the CSCBD's inception 50+ years ago. Nor do we have an issue with one officer completing the designated open meetings training.

The expanded burden, however, of providing email addresses for ALL officers of the association (in our case, four) rather than just one is an additional expense and unwelcome change to the legislation. It has long been our successful practice to have a central email address that is monitored daily by our Town Hall Administrative Assistant (or myself in her absence) and all messages directed to CCA Board members are promptly passed on to the appropriate recipient. While I understand the smaller SCBDs do not have paid administrative staff like we do, perhaps there could be an exception for those that do? As you know, it is hard enough to get folks to volunteer to serve on boards like ours without subjecting them to the inevitable increase in spam associated with yet another email account. I also see this requirement as having a negative impact on Town Hall's workflow whereby important messages that should be quickly handled by staff are missed because of having gone directly to a board member that is not as conscientious about regularly checking messages. Our current system works well; please don't try to "fix" it.

In your email to me on 3/4/25, you mentioned awaiting some "audit work" from the County Auditor regarding SCBDs. Can you share anything of note there?

I would welcome a follow up conversation at your convenience on the bill's language as there are still a couple of aspects that remain the same from the previous version that confuse me. I am available most anytime at the numbers below.

Sincerely,

Martin

Martin H. Simon

Town Manager

Crofton Civic Association/Crofton Special Community Benefit District

1576 Crofton Parkway, Crofton, MD 21114



 CroftonTownHall.org

URL: www.CroftonCommunity.org



--

Shannon Leadbetter
County Councilwoman

District 7

410.222.2417

Subscribe to the District 7 Newsletter [Here](#)

Please note my aide's contact information: Jessica Ewing, jewing@aacounty.org

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Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: Opposing Tax Bill 32-25: Unjustified Tax & Regulatory Burden

Shannon Leadbetter <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>

Fri, May 16, 2025 at 10:43 AM

To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Good morning, can you please share this with the rest of the councilmembers?

Jess Ewing

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Amy Battaglia**

Date: Fri, May 16, 2025 at 10:23 AM

Subject: Opposing Tax Bill 32-25: Unjustified Tax & Regulatory Burden

To: <SLeadbetter@aacounty.org>

Rodvien Tax Bill 32-25 Makes False Claim To Raise Taxes

In her quest to get support for her new tax bill, AAC Representative Lisa Rodvien has viciously attacked the reputation of our Hillsmere Shores community of 1,200 homes based on the hearsay of a single person based on zero evidence. It is Rodvien who has failed to meet with our Board or attend our open community meetings to ascertain the veracity of the claim and listen to her constituents. Craven political behavior practiced by Rodvien to generate more taxes and regulatory burden based on lies to serve her goal.

Rodvien's County bill 32-25 raises taxes across 80 County-wide Special Community Benefit Districts (imposing a 5% tax that expands to 9% by 2029) to expand County staffing and increase bureaucratic requirements. Instead, these special tax districts should be lauded for their community commitment to tax themselves to improve and maintain neighborhood spaces and waterways, not attacked and penalized by Rodvien.

Hillsmere Shores is a County-wide model for investing to address stormwater runoff and living shorelines only made possible by our strong community volunteer network and our special tax district status. Hillsmere Shores enjoys a stellar reputation receiving recognition and ongoing investment support from the County and partnering with Arundel Rivers & Watershed Stewards. MD Delegates Dana Jones and Shaneka Henson also sponsored State funding along with County assistance combined with funding from Hillsmere Shores to enable these innovative community approaches. This does not square with the reputational smears made by Rodvien against our community. Bill 32-25 will kill such cooperative efforts through extreme taxation and bureaucracy.

In sum, AACC Bill 32-25 proves the axiom "a solution in search of a problem". Please "VOTE NO" on this ill-informed bill to raise taxes on all 80 SBCD districts across the County and needlessly add to the bureaucratic burden of maintaining them.

Respectfully,
Amy Battaglia

--

Shannon Leadbetter
County Councilwoman
District 7
410.222.2417
Subscribe to the District 7 Newsletter [Here](#)

Please note my aide's contact information: Jessica Ewing, jewing@aacounty.org

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Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: Proposed Bill 32-25

Lisa Rodvien <ccrodv33@aacounty.org>
Reply-To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org
To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Tue, May 13, 2025 at 1:40 PM

Another email responding to 32-25. Could you please share with the council and Ethan?

Sincerely,

Lisa Rodvien, District 6 Councilmember

Anne Arundel County Council

P.O. Box 2700

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-222-1401

lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

(she/her/hers)

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From: **Laura Bertran** [REDACTED]

Date: Thu, May 8, 2025 at 9:40 AM

Subject: Proposed Bill 32-25

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org <lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org>, Steuart Pittman <info@pittmanforpeople.com>Cc: Hillsmere Board HSIA <postmaster@hillsmershores.org>

Dear Councilwoman Rodvien and County Executive Pittman,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to proposed Bill 32-25 which would change how SCBD's such as ours in Hillsmere are governed.

While this bill seems intended to improve transparency it definitely introduces a layer of bureaucracy and expanded county control that are counterproductive. The bill seems to be a solution in search of a problem. I've lived in Hillsmere Shores for 24 years and in those years have never seen any evidence that our HSIA Board and officers were acting in anything but the best interests of our community. The Board works diligently to keep all of us residents informed and embraces transparency.

Hillsmere Shores Board and residents value our ability to govern ourselves and don't see a need to divert funds to the county that are meant to improve and maintain our own community.

Laura Bertran
[REDACTED]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: SCBD Bill

Shannon Leadbetter <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>
To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Mon, May 19, 2025 at 9:48 AM

Can you please share this with the council? Thank you!

Jess

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Helene Raven** [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, May 17, 2025 at 8:19 AM
Subject: SCBD Bill
To: SLeadbetter@aacounty.org <sleadbetter@aacounty.org>

Helene C. Raven
[REDACTED]

Annapolis, Maryland 21403
[REDACTED]

Anne Arundel County Council
[44 Calvert Street](#)
Annapolis, MD 21401-1930

May 17, 2025

Good morning,

In late April 2025 the Baltimore Sun and Capital Gazette published articles about the upcoming Bill 32-25 related to Anne Arundel County Special Community Benefit Districts (SCBD.) I am grateful that the newspapers brought this bill to the attention of volunteers of SCBDs and by doing so encouraged closer scrutiny of the bill and its impact on these districts.

According to the newspapers, Oyster Harbor had an issue that the community board resolved after spending two years and \$200,000 on legal fees. According to the Capital Gazette, Oyster Harbor Citizens Association used special tax monies on legal expenses "while community assets went without improvement and maintenance."

Oyster Harbor is one of 84 SCBDs, or .011% of all special tax districts, yet this bill creates an enormous cost in money and volunteer time due to mismanagement of one SCBD.

This is the third attempt to pass this bill, with each version more draconian than the previous one. Meanwhile, it took decades for the County to fund and build the fire station on the corner of Arundel-on-the-Bay and Bay Ridge Roads.

Please take a closer look at this bill considering the consequences for all SCBDs. It is a heavy-handed approach as a response to one SCBD out of 84.

Thank you.

Helene C. Raven
Hillsmere Resident

--

Shannon Leadbetter
County Councilwoman
District 7
410.222.2417
Subscribe to the District 7 Newsletter [Here](#)

Please note my aide's contact information: Jessica Ewing, jewing@aacounty.org

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Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: Strong Support for Bill 32-25 – Increasing SCBD Transparency & Accountability

2 messages

Lisa Rodvien <ccrodv33@aacounty.org>
 Reply-To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org
 To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fri, May 2, 2025 at 1:05 PM

Hello Kaley,

I am starting to receive testimony via email on Bill 32-25 (SCBDs). Could you share the following with my colleagues and admin?

Sincerely,

Lisa Rodvien, District 6 Councilmember

Anne Arundel County Council

P.O. Box 2700

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-222-1401

lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

(she/her/hers)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Aaron Yager**

Date: Tue, Apr 29, 2025 at 7:53 AM

Subject: Strong Support for Bill 32-25 – Increasing SCBD Transparency & Accountability

To: <lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org>Cc: <ccbuin24@aacounty.org>, [REDACTED]

Dear Councilmember Rodvien,

My name is Aaron Yager, and my wife, Stephanie Richards, and I live in the Manhattan Beach SCBD in Severna Park. I'm writing to express our enthusiastic support for Bill 32-25, particularly the provisions that require SCBD boards to:

- make working e-mail addresses for each officer publicly available; and
- conduct meetings in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act and the pertinent sections of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act.

Because openness matters, I want to disclose up front that we are currently plaintiffs in a property-related lawsuit against our SCBD. While that dispute is separate from the reforms addressed in Bill 32-25, our personal experience dealing with the Manhattan Beach Civic Association certainly underscores how critically important transparency and accurate communication are for those who live in SCBDs as well as for all Anne Arundel County residents.

Why these reforms matter to Manhattan Beach residents:

- **Closed-door executive sessions:** The board at times convenes executive sessions without later releasing minutes. Such an executive session last occurred on 1 April 2025.
- **Incomplete or inaccurate minutes:** Summaries of general meetings at times omit substantive discussion and misstate attendance and voting eligibility (e.g., minutes from a 12 November 2024 budget vote credited both a board member and his daughter as present and voting for three tax accounts when, in fact, only the daughter was present). Moreover, only the minutes from the three most-recent meetings (dating back only to October 2024) are posted to their website (<https://mbcaweb.org/meeting-minutes/>), depriving residents of a meaningful historical record.

- **Litigation opacity:** Repeated requests from community members for status and cost details on an ongoing lawsuit have been met with silence. Because the board will not say whether legal fees are coming from SCBD tax assessments or from clubhouse-rental or other revenue streams, residents have no way to know how community funds in excess of the \$1,500 FY25 legal budget are being spent. The minutes of the most recent general meeting add only that, “Due to ongoing litigation we will be limited to operational expenses at this time,” without any supporting explanation or accounting.

- **Unofficial communication channels:** The board relies on an unofficial, restricted-access, board-moderated Facebook group as its de facto information outlet; however, when board members post there they assert they are speaking only as private residents—not in their official capacity—and they permit defamatory remarks about fellow residents to remain unaddressed. My wife and I were, in fact, banned from that group - without cause - in November 2024.

- **Lack of conflict-of-interest safeguards:** One board member is married to the accountant listed as the SCBD County contact for the Office of Finance (Finance) “Finance Contact” (<https://www.aacounty.org/sites/default/files/2024-08/fy24-scbd-attachment-1.pdf>), yet the board has not adopted disclosure or recusal policies to mitigate the appearance of a conflict of interest.

These practices erode trust and suppress participation. Your bill's clear standards, mandatory training, and graduated penalties offer residents a practical path to secure the transparency and fiscal accountability that our tax dollars deserve.

I wanted to keep this letter focused on Bill 32-25's provisions, but Stephanie and I have documented additional concerns about Manhattan Beach's governance. We would be happy to share further information or suggestions that could aid any future legislation aimed at strengthening SCBD oversight.

Thank you for championing this legislation. Stephanie joins me in urging the Council to pass Bill 32-25.

I plan to submit written testimony and am happy to answer any questions ahead of the 19 May public hearing. You can reach me at aaron.d.yager@gmail.com or 240-461-6378.

Sincerely,

Aaron Yager

21146

Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fri, May 2, 2025 at 1:08 PM

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

Sure will. Thank you.

Kaley

[Quoted text hidden]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Fwd: Support for Bill 32-25

Lisa Rodvien <ccrodv33@aacounty.org>
Reply-To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org
To: Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Tue, May 13, 2025 at 12:49 PM

Hello Kaley,

Could you please distribute this message on 32-25 to the whole council & Ethan?

Sincerely,

Lisa Rodvien, District 6 Councilmember

Anne Arundel County Council

P.O. Box 2700

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-222-1401

lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

(she/her/hers)

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From: **Alex Wyshyvanuk**

Date: Fri, May 2, 2025 at 11:40 AM

Subject: Support for Bill 32-25

To: <SLeadbetter@aacounty.org>

Cc: <lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org>, <[jewling@aacounty.org](mailto:jewing@aacounty.org)>, <ccbuin24@aacounty.org>

Good Morning Ma'am,

I saw an article about Ms. Rodvien's bill 32-25 to increase oversight of SCBDs & SECDS in the Capital Gazette. I strongly support this bill and would urge you to do the same.

I have a number of grievances with my own Cedarhurst Community Association, including failure to follow the procedures outlined in our own bylaws for our own board elections, unethical behavior by members acting on behalf of the association, egregiously stupid spending decisions (for example, blowing ~\$105,000 on windows for the community house). I believe the provisions of Ms. Rodvien's bill will be the very *first* step towards ensuring my community association, as well as all other SCBD/SECDS in the county, are fair and good stewards of our tax dollars.

Thank You,
Alex Wyshyvanuk



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

(no subject)

1 message

Matthew Jacobs [REDACTED]

Mon, May 12, 2025 at 9:50 AM

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org, council@aacounty.org, ccschu24@aacounty.org

Dear Council member Rodvien and Anne Arundel County Council,

As a concerned individual, I strongly oppose Bill 32-25, which imposes a 5% administrative charge on Special Community Benefit District (SCBD) taxes starting in 2027. This fee diverts funds from community projects—such as parks, safety, and infrastructure—to the county's general fund. It also increases county control over volunteer community boards, imposing burdensome regulations and penalties.

SCBD residents pay extra taxes to maintain their neighborhoods, showing their commitment to local pride. This bill undermines their efforts by redirecting their money and authority to a county that hasn't shown sufficient transparency, especially after recent administrative failures. Taxpayers deserve control of their funds and expect government accountability first.

I urge you to vote NO on Bill 32-25 at the County Council meeting on May 19, 2025. Protect community rights and ensure local tax dollars serve their intended purpose. Governments must prioritize transparency before imposing new fees or controls.

Sincerely,

Matthew Jacobs

Epping Forest Resident



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Oppose Bill 32-25 – Protect Community Tax Dollars

1 message

Meghan Jacobs <[REDACTED]> [REDACTED] org, ccschu24@aacounty.org

Dear Council member Rodvien and Anne Arundel County Council,
As a concerned individual, I strongly oppose Bill 32-25, which imposes a 5% administrative charge on Special Community Benefit District (SCBD) taxes starting in 2027. This fee diverts funds from community projects—such as parks, safety, and infrastructure—to the county's general fund. It also increases county control over volunteer community boards, imposing burdensome regulations and penalties.

SCBD residents pay extra taxes to maintain their neighborhoods, showing their commitment to local pride. This bill undermines their efforts by redirecting their money and authority to a county that hasn't shown sufficient transparency, especially after recent administrative failures. Taxpayers deserve control of their funds and expect government accountability first.

I urge you to vote NO on Bill 32-25 at the County Council meeting on May 19, 2025. Protect community rights and ensure local tax dollars serve their intended purpose. Governments must prioritize transparency before imposing new fees or controls.

Sincerely,

Meghan Jacobs, PA-C

[REDACTED] 1



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

OPPOSE BILL 32-25

Christine Evans [REDACTED]

Tue, May 13, 2025 at 1:08 PM

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

Cc: council@aacounty.org, ccschu24@aacounty.org

Good afternoon Councilmember Rodvien and Anne Arundel County Council,

I live in Epping Forest, a Special Community Benefit District. I am deeply concerned about this proposed Bill.

This Bill appears to divert funds from our own community projects to the County's general funds all while giving the County Executive a 27% raise.

We have worked with the County successfully for nearly 100 years.

I agree it would be helpful and important for one of our Board Reps. to complete the Open Meetings Act online training.

Anne Arundel County already has **one of the highest median property taxes** in the United States (ranked 288th of the 3143 counties in order of median property taxes). SCBD's pay an even higher rate to maintain our neighborhoods. This Bill undermines our efforts by redirecting our money and authority to AACO which frankly has not been transparent regarding recent administrative failures. When we will have transparency on the recent County cyber attack. Tax payers should be informed what data was compromised!!!

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Bill 32-25 at the County Council meeting May 19, 2025. Protect community rights and ensure local tax dollars serve their intended purpose. Governments must prioritize transparency before imposing new fees or controls.

Sincerely,

Christine Evans
[REDACTED]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

OPPOSE BILL 32-25

J Snugg <[REDACTED]@aacounty.org, "ccschu24@aacounty.org" <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

Good afternoon Councilmember Rodvien and Anne Arundel County Council,

I live in Epping Forest, a Special Community Benefit District. I am deeply concerned about this proposed Bill.

This Bill appears to divert funds from our own community projects to the County's general funds all while giving the County Executive a 27% raise.

We have worked with the County successfully for nearly 100 years.

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I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Bill 32-25 at the County Council meeting May 19, 2025. Protect community rights and ensure local tax dollars serve their intended purpose. Governments must prioritize transparency before imposing new fees or controls.

Regards,

Jeannie Snuggerud

[REDACTED]
Annapolis, MD 21401
[REDACTED]



Kaley Schultze <ccschu24@aacounty.org>

OPPOSE Bill 32-25

Megan McGilvray [REDACTED]

Wed, May 14, 2025 at 11:37 AM

To: lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org, council@aacounty.org, ccschu24@aacounty.org

Good morning Councilmember Rodvien and Anne Arundel County Council,

I live in Epping Forest, a Special Community Benefit District. I am deeply concerned about this proposed Bill.

This Bill appears to divert funds from our own community projects to the County's general funds all while giving the County Executive a 27% raise.

We have worked with the County successfully for nearly 100 years.

I agree it would be helpful and important for one of our Board Reps. to complete the Open Meetings Act online training.

Anne Arundel County already has **one of the highest median property taxes** in the United States (ranked 288th of the 3143 counties in order of median property taxes). SCBD's pay an even higher rate to maintain our neighborhoods. This Bill undermines our efforts by redirecting our money and authority to AACO which frankly has not been transparent regarding recent administrative failures. When we will have transparency on the recent County cyber attack. Tax payers should be informed what data was compromised.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Bill 32-25 at the County Council meeting May 19, 2025. Protect community rights and ensure local tax dollars serve their intended purpose. Governments must prioritize transparency before imposing new fees or controls.

Thank you,

Megan [REDACTED]

Annapolis, MD 21401

Bay Ridge Civic Association (BRCA) Position on County Bill 32-25

The Bay Ridge Civic Association (BRCA) expresses our strong opposition to County Bill 32-25. We believe the bill imposes burdensome and unnecessary requirements on Community Associations and Homeowners Associations managing Special Tax Districts, potentially leading to unintended consequences for volunteer-run boards.

- The bill mandates that all community meetings be open to the general public, including attorneys, members of the press, and invitees of members. While we support transparency within the community association, we believe that opening all meetings to the general public may introduce unnecessary complications and undermine the purpose of local self-governance.
- We fully support the County's need to increase administrative charges to cover staff-level efforts. However, it is unclear what charges are included. BRCA has requested a copy of the County Audit report where the charges were evaluated and the new rates determined to conduct due diligence as representatives of our taxed constituency. No Fiscal Note was included as part of Bill 32-25.
- The bill includes severe penalties for non-compliance, including withholding of the communities' tax money and dissolution of special tax districts, without an outlined appeal process. We recommend the addition of an Appeals or Review Mechanism Section, which could outline:
 - Who can appeal (e.g., affected parties, organizations, etc.).
 - What decisions are appealable (e.g., notices, penalties, dissolution orders).
 - How to appeal (e.g., file a notice of appeal, timing requirements, documentation needed).
 - Where to appeal (e.g., administrative tribunal, court, or oversight body).
 - Timeline and process for review and resolution.

Conclusion

Restricting community association meetings to local taxpayers and residents ensures the association can function efficiently, respectfully, and with a focus on the people it was created to serve. It protects the integrity of the process and strengthens local democracy. Voluntary Community Association Boards play a critical and largely successful and impactful role in managing Special Tax District budgets, often with limited resources and without professional staff. Rather than imposing strict and onerous penalties for non-compliance, it is vital that government agencies provide these boards with clear guidance, support, and education.

Approved at BRCA General Community Meeting on May 12th, 2025
President Stuart Jones presiding

CBCIA

COLUMBIA BEACH CITIZENS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 480
SHADY SIDE, MD 20764



May 18, 2025

Ms. Shannon Leadbetter
District 7 Councilmember
44 Calvert Street, 1st Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

SLeadbetter@aacounty.org cc: Jewing@aacounty.org

Dear Ms. Leadbetter,

I am writing to you today not only as the President of the Columbia Beach Citizens Improvement Association (CBCIA) in Shady Side, MD, but also a concerned resident. A community established by African American's back in the 1940's, which today serves as a community to a diverse population. In 2023, we were recognized as a "Historically African American Community". The CBCIA Board is **opposed** to the proposal of AA County Bill No. 32-25.

The proposed bill would cause an undue hardship to the governance of the community. If the intention of the bill is to address the fraudulent use of SCBD funds, the unintended consequences outlined in the proposal will destroy the continuation of these communities to operate as SCBD, due to the unreasonable requirements. Our community board consists of volunteer residents who are elected by the body to govern.

Other factors that would create hardships for SCBD's are as follows:

- **Open Meetings:** CBCIA is not a local government, so we **should not be subject** to the Maryland Open Meeting Act. We hold quarterly meetings with community members, which have been virtual since COVID-19., which does including sending out community emails and snail mail (preferred by our seniors). If we do hold an in-person meeting, we have to locate a space to accommodate the community. CBCIA does not have a community clubhouse, so we have to look for a no-cost or minimal cost facility to hold meeting, usually the library, churches or VFW.
- **Recordings of Meeting:** This should **not be** mandated to record meetings due to possible legal implications of misuse of the recording to the detriment of the community or residents. However all meetings are carefully documented and transcribed as minutes by our CBCIA secretary.
- **County Surcharge:** CBCIA currently pays \$2,000 every year as a surcharge, which is deducted from the funds received. The proposal to increase **the amount by 5xs would be an unreasonable** cost to pass on to the community which has residents of varying economic capabilities to cover the increase in their taxes. While I understand that the County provides a service to review and approve the proposed budgets to make they are in compliance, then collects the SCBD funds from the community lost owners, and finally disburse said funds back to the community for operations. We think it would be unreasonable for us to pay an additional amount for any other services, which are the same services provided to non-SCBD community associations and property owners.

- **Contact Information:** The CBCIA Board and Committee chairs are comprised of resident volunteers. There are no paid positions. It **will be unreasonable** to require the community association to provide email addresses to the residents and to respond in a certain amount of time to residents. Our current Board and Committee Chairs all work full-time positions in their respective careers. While we do our best to respond in a timely manner, the bulk of the work is done on the weekends.
- **Complaints:** CBCIA is **opposed** to the proposal that funds can be withheld; which would give unreasonable power to “bad actors”. There is no mechanism in place to quickly resolve these situations. This would cause a serious delay in the management of the community without access to the funds.
- **MD HOA Act:** The MD HOA act be applied to the SBCD’s instead, which has already addressed the relevant issues and has case law to support as well as the MD Attorney General’s Office – Consumer Protection Division. This would also allow SBCD’s to build reserves for improvements which are costly and can be covered in one year’s budget allocation.

Thank you for your time and attention regarding this matter.

Best regards,


Jameya Way
CBCIA President

Dear Council members:

Please consider my comments as you deliberate on Bill No. 32-35 regarding Special Community Benefit Districts, Shore Erosion Control Districts, and Waterway Improvement Districts. While my comments are written in the context of SCBDs, they would also apply to SECDS and WIDs.

As the former County Auditor who was responsible for reviewing the financial statements submitted by the SCBDs for 21 years, I want to make sure the County Council understands that none of the provisions of this bill will preclude or reduce the risk of a theft or misuse of SCBD funds as happened in the Oyster Harbor community, nor will any of the provisions ensure a theft or misuse of SCBD funds is detected. What reduces the risk of theft or misuse of funds is for the community associations administering the SCBDs to have adequate internal controls to ensure no one person can both perpetrate and conceal a theft, misuse, error or irregularity.

I am all for transparency and accountability over SCBD tax dollars. However, Bill 32-35 is flawed, and the County Council may wish to consider alternative provisions.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Teresa Sutherland

- **§4-7-201 (D) - General Provisions (page 3, line 38 – page 4, line 20)**

- **4-7-201(D)(I):** This section says the community association that administers an SCBD shall comport with §§ 3-301 through 3-307 of the General Provisions Article of the State Code, which are some, but not all, of the provisions in the State's Open Meetings Act.
- **4-7-201(D)(II):** This section says the community association that administers an SCBD shall comply with §11B-111(3), 11B-112(A) and (B), 11B-112.2(F), and 11B-113.6 of the Real Property Article of the State Code, which are some, but not all, of the provisions of the State's Homeowners Association Act.

The General Provisions Article of the State Code, § 3-101(h)(1) defines who is a public body for the purposes of the Open Meetings Act. The private corporations who administer the SCBDs do not meet the definition of public body. If they did,

County legislation would not be necessary as the State law would already apply to them.

Likewise, the Real Property Article of the State Code, § 11-B-101(i) defines to whom the Homeowners Association Act applies. Some community associations that administer SCBDs may meet the definition of homeowners association under state law, but some do not, like the Hillsmere Shores Improvement Association. Again, those that do meet the definition already have to comply with the State law.

How will it work in practice for the County to require a private corporation to comply with provisions of state law that don't apply to those corporations under the definitions included in those state laws?

For example, the proposed bill says the community association administering the SCBDs have to comport with § 3-307 of the Open Meetings Act, but § 3-307 specifically says it applies only to those public bodies listed in § 3-307(a), which doesn't include the corporations administering the SCBDs. So how will that work?

Perhaps it makes no difference, but would it be cleaner to put into County law the language of the requirements the County wants the community associations to comply with rather than impose the requirements by reference to State law?

- **§ 4-7-104 - Penalties for non-compliance**

This section lists penalties for noncompliance with County and State law.

- § 4-1-104(A)(1) allows the County to reject a budget submission, resulting in no appropriations for that district. (Presumably this could happen by the County Executive not including an appropriation in the proposed budget or by the County Council cutting the appropriation from the proposed budget.)
- § 4-1-104(A)(2) allows the County to withhold the appropriation of any funds, except for the repayment of loans that were approved by the County Council.
- § 4-1-104(A)(3) allows the county to withhold the disbursement of funds to the community association.
- § 4-1-104(A)(4) allows the County to prohibit the expenditure of funds by the community association.
- § 4-1-105(A)(5) allows the County to require the community association to reimburse the district for any fund that have been improperly expended, “including through a tax assessment as a source of reimbursement.”

- **Comments on § 4-104(A)(2):**

Given that § 4-104(A)(1), (3), and (4) allow the County (presumably the Administration) to withhold a budget submission, withhold the disbursement of funds to a community association, and prohibit the expenditure of funds by a district, is § 4-104(A)(2), which allows the County to withhold appropriations, necessary? And does it infringe on the powers of the legislative branch?

§ 4-102(A)(2) allows the County to withhold the appropriation of funds, except those required to repay a loan approved by the County Council. I may be remembering incorrectly, but I thought the Administration could not withhold an appropriation that the County Council approved in the budget ordinance; for example, if the County Council appropriated \$50,000,000 to AACC, the Administration could not reduce or withhold those funds from AACC. Therefore, does allowing the Administration to withhold an appropriation approved by the County Council infringe on the County Council's powers?

- **Comments on § 4-104(A)(5):**

§4-7-104 (A)(5) of the proposed bill that says County may require a community association to reimburse the district for any fund that have been improperly expended, "including through a tax assessment as a source of reimbursement."

Please consider what this would look like in practice as this provision is, in my opinion, nonsensical.

Say the County Council assesses \$100,000 of SCBD taxes on a community that has no other source of funds, and the Board of Directors spends those tax dollars for a purpose that is not allowed, or the \$100,000 is stolen.

To make up for the \$100,000 of misspent or stolen SCBD taxes, the County is going to tax the residents a second time for \$100,000? How does it make sense to tax the residents, who are the victims of the impropriety, not the perpetrators, twice? How does taxing the residents twice hold the Board of Directors accountable for their noncompliance with the State and County laws governing SCBDs?

§ 715 of the County Charter says any officer, agent, or employee of the County who knowingly spends County funds in violation of § 715 Charter is personally liable for the amount spent. Similarly, I suggest the Council focus any penalties imposed for misspent SCBD funds on those who control and are responsible for spending those

funds. Enact a provision that holds the Boards of Directors personally liable for misspent SCBD taxes.

- **§ 4-7-101. Provisions relating to all districts.**

(e) Administrative Charge: This section increases the administrative charge that the SCBDs have to pay to reimburse the General Fund for its efforts.

- Currently the administrative charge is 5% of the disbursements to a district, not to exceed \$2,000 and not less than \$100.
- Under the proposed bill, the administrative charge would increase beginning in FY2027 to:
 - FY2027: 5%, not to exceed \$10,000 and not less than \$100.
 - FY2028: 7%, not to exceed \$10,000 + CPI adjustment, not less than \$100.
 - FY2029: **9%**, not to exceed \$10,000 + CPI, not less than \$100.

Based on the disbursements to the SCBD's reported in the County's FY2024 audited financial statements (p. 173), the SCBDs would have paid administrative charges totaling approximately \$100,000 in FY2024. Assuming there is no change in disbursements to the districts, those charges would increase to about \$325,000 in FY2029 under the provisions of the proposed bill.

While \$100,000 may not be sufficient to cover the County's administrative costs, based on my experience reviewing SCBD matters as the County Auditor, \$325,000 may be too much. I have asked Councilwoman Rodvien for the County Auditor's analysis supporting the assertion that the General Fund is subsidizing the costs to administer the SCBDs, and she said she would provide it to me when it is available.

Unless the Auditor and/or the Administration can provide you with actual data on the staffing costs and the amount of time the Auditor, Finance, Budget, and Law offices spend administering SCBDs, I suggest you delay the proposed increase in administrative charges until FY2028.

Then, during the upcoming fiscal year (FY2026), have those offices keep track of their staff hours spent administering the SCBDs (excluding legislation establishing a district, which is not a cost to administer existing districts). You would then have data on which to evaluate whether the administrative charge should be adjusted and by how much.

You may also want to consider whether the fees should be based on a percentage of the disbursements to a district, as it is now, or whether the number of tax

accounts or some other factor would result in a more equitable allocation of the County's administrative costs.

In my experience, how much money a district received did not correlate to the amount of time the County Auditor's Office spent reviewing the district's financial statements. It took the same amount of time to review the financial statements of a district that received \$10,000 as it did for a district that received \$1,000,000. The determining factor in the amount of time the Auditor's Office spent on reviewing an individual SCBD's financial statements was the issues encountered, not the level of disbursements.

I suspect, but don't know for certain, that the same holds true for the Office of Law, where the time spent will depend on the issues being considered, not the amount of disbursements; for the Budget Office's time to process the budget submissions, whether those budgets are large or small; and for the Office of Finance's time to disburse funds to the districts, whether disbursing large amounts or small amounts.

Where the efforts might differ is in the tax billings as larger districts likely have more tax accounts to bill; however, given most of the districts are long-established and the billing process is automated, I'm not sure that difference would be significant.

- **Amendments**

- ***I believe an amendment is in order, either for § 4-7-101(e)(2)(I) or for § 4-7-101(e)(2)(II) and (III).***
 - § 4-7-101(e)(2)(I) sets the administrative fee beginning in FY2027 at 5%, but not less than \$100 or more than \$10,000 for districts that “**receive** and manage disbursements of funds.”
 - § 4-7-101(e)(2)(II) sets the administrative fee in FY2028 at 7%, but not less than \$100 or more than \$10,000, adjusted for CPI, for districts that “**do not receive** and manage disbursements of district funds.”
 - § 4-7-101(e)(2)(III) sets the administrative fee in FY2029 at 9%, but not less than \$100 or more than \$10,000, adjusted for CPI, also for districts that “**do not receive** and manage disbursements of district funds.”

Is it a drafting error that (e)(2)(I) applies to districts that RECEIVE and manage the disbursement of funds, while (e)(2)(II) and (III) apply to districts that DO NOT RECEIVE and manage the disbursement of funds?

- ***I suggest you amend §4-7-201(D)(2)(I) to impose a deadline by which a community association has to designate an officer to receive training on the Open Meetings Act.*** While §4-7-201(D)(2)(II) says the officer has 90 days to complete the training once designated, a community association could

stall indefinitely in designating that person, making the 90-day deadline to complete the training moot.

- ***I also suggest you amend § 4-7-201(D)(2)(III).*** This section says a community association may not meet in closed session unless the community association “has designated at least one officer to receive the Open Meetings Act training.” ***I suggest you amend this section to say a community association may not meet in closed session unless at least one officer “has completed the training offered by the Maryland Attorney General on the Maryland Open Meetings Act.”*** Merely designating a person for the training does not ensure someone on the Board of Directors knows when and how the Board may go into closed session.

Dear County Council members:

Please see my additional comments below on Bill No. 32-35 pertaining to SCBDs, SECDs, and WIDs.

I fully support open meetings, open records, and safeguards on the use of SCBD funds. However, I don't think the proposed language in this bill is not the way to accomplish that.

Rather than enacting requirements in the County Code by reference to the State Code, decide what requirements you want to impose on the community associations that administer SCBDs and include that language directly in County Code. Also, please make it clear that those provisions apply only to SCBD activities and not to any other private activities of these private corporations.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Teresa Sutherland

Provisions of the proposed bill:

- **§ 4-7-201(D)(1)(I)** of the proposed bill states, "ALL meetings of the civic or community association that administers a SCBD shall be open to all owners of property within the district and shall comport with §§ 3-301 – 307" of the Open Meetings Act.
- **§ 4-7-201(D)(1)(II)** states, "The civic or community association that administers a SCBD has to comply with § 11-B-111(3), 11B-112(A) and (B), 11B-112.2(F) and 11B-113.6" of the State's Homeowners Association Act.

Is it the sponsor's intent to require a community association to comply with the Open Meetings Act for ALL meetings, or just for those meetings involving SCBD matters? Is it the sponsor's intent to require a community association to comply with the referenced sections of the Homeowners Association Act in ALL of its matters, or only in SCBD matters?

For example, Hillsmere has a community pool. No one is required to join the pool, and the pool's operating costs are covered by voluntary pool memberships, and the County Code prohibits the use of SCBD funds for the pool's operations.

If the community association has a meeting to approve a contract to hire a pool manager to oversee the pool's operations, does that meeting have to be open and comport with the referenced provisions of the Open Meetings Act because § 4-7-201(D)(1)(I) says **ALL** meetings of a community association that administers an SCBD shall be open, even though no SCBD dollars are involved?

If the community association wanted to increase the pool's membership fees by more than 15%, is that an "assessment increase" that would require the community association to

comply with 11B-112(F) of the Homeowners Association, even though no SCBD dollars are involved?

Under 4-7-201(D)(1)(II), does a community association that administers an SCBD have to comply with §11B-112(A) of the Homeowners Association Act for books and records that have nothing to do with SBCD funds (for example, pool operations records or records pertaining to HSIA's Fourth of July parade, an event that involves no SCBD funding)?

How can the County impose these requirements on the private activities of a private corporation that don't involve SCBD tax dollars?

If the County Council chooses not to remove all references to State Code in § 4-7-201 of the proposed bill, the Council should strike the reference to Section 11B-112(F) of the State's Homeowners Association Act because it is irrelevant and conflicts with County Code.

§ 11B-112(F) of the Homeowners Association Act states that, "Except for an expenditure because of a condition that, if not corrected, could reasonably result in a threat to the health and safety of the lot owners or a significant risk of damage to the development, any expenditure that would result in an amount of assessments for the current fiscal year in excess of 15% of the budgeted amount previously adopted shall be approved by an amendment to the budget adopted at a special meeting for which not less than 10 days' written notice or notice by electronic transmission shall be provided to the lot owners."

It is the County Council who adopts the budgets for the SCBDs in the annual budget ordinance (by a single line item for each district), and it is unlawful under any circumstance for a community association to expend SCBD funds in excess of the budget adopted by the County Council for that district.

Likewise, it is the County Council who assesses SCBD taxes by ordinance, and a community association cannot increase or decrease that legally adopted tax assessment.

The County Council should strike the reference to § 11B-112(F) of the Homeowners Association Act in the proposed bill because it is irrelevant with respect to SCBDs and conflicts with County Code.

Mason's Beach Citizens Association, Inc.

P. O. Box 341

Deale, Maryland 20751

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Terry W. Prosser

Vice President

Troy Hvizda

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Ray Siever

Steve Brien

May 19, 2025

Anne Arundel County Council

44 Calvert Street

Annapolis, Maryland 21404-1831

Dear Anne Arundel County Council,

This letter is on behalf of the Mason's Beach Citizen's Association, Inc. We are urging the Council not to adopt the legislation proposed in Anne Arundel County Bill 32-25. Mason's Beach is a small 67-member SCBD with \$10,000 in annual SCBD dues assessments for all community maintenance. Without the SCBD we could not maintain our property and roads, our pier or the waterfront walkway. The separate larger erosion control fund allows us to maintain 2,200 feet of a 50+ year wooden bulkhead. The SCBD is our lifeline.

All officers and board members are volunteers. Mason's Beach is not a public community. It should not be subject to laws designed for the public at large. Our board meetings are open to community members not the general public. We could never accommodate the potential crowds in meetings announced to the public. We have no clubhouse and meet in our homes or at Community picnics.

Recording our meetings would require the purchase of equipment we simply cannot afford. Recording discourages attendance and a full exchange of viewpoints. We currently pay a reasonable and affordable surcharge for county services. Increasing the surcharge would further reduce the services we can provide our community. We do not tie our dues to the CPI (we vote on them) nor should the CPI govern the county surcharge. Allowing complaints as a basis for withholding funds, which are funds collected from the community lot owners, is asking for problems. It would only empower disgruntled members to hold the community hostage, and for what? We act quickly and communicate on all complaints.

Last, none of these provisions would help prevent fraud. They are a collection of administrative measures, well-intended, but ultimately not helpful or necessary. If you must enact something, please consider carving out exceptions for the smaller SCBDs.

Thank you for your consideration.



Terry W. Prosser

President Mason's Beach Citizens Association, Inc. on behalf of the Board

Cf: Sara Arthur, Esquire; MBCA Officers and Board