



**CALVERT COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

175 Main Street  
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678  
410-535-1600 • 301-855-1243  
www.calvertcountymd.gov

*Board of Commissioners*  
Mark C. Cox Sr.  
Catherine M. Grasso  
Earl F. Hance  
Mike Hart  
Todd Ireland

March 10, 2025

**Via Electronic Mail**

Calvert County Senators and Delegation

Re: HB352/SB321 - Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2025

Senators and Delegation,

We generally support the Administration's Fiscal Year 2026 budget plan for real estate transfer tax revenues and bond fund investment in parks, agriculture, conservation, and historic preservation for Maryland. We reject, however, the Department of Legislative Services' (DLS) recommendation to modify the transfer tax allocation for fiscal years 2026 through 2029 by transferring funds from critical land preservation programs, including POS Local, POS Stateside, Rural Legacy, among other programs, to the General Fund. We further reject the DLS recommendation to expand the use of Waterway Improvement Funds and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund to be used for the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) general operating purposes.

Maryland's Program Open Space, a cornerstone of our State's conservation efforts for over five decades, has demonstrably enhanced public access to natural environments and fostered community development through strategic park acquisition and development. The efficacy of POS is rooted in its alignment with locally driven Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans (LPPRPs), which inform the Statewide Land Preservation & Recreation Plan. This integrated approach ensures that investments are strategically targeted to address specific community needs. The DLS recommendations, which propose defunding critical land preservation programs, would undermine the carefully articulated public vision embodied in these comprehensive plans. Such a reallocation would significantly diminish the capacity of both local and state entities to execute these long-term strategic initiatives.

We urge you to engage the Committees and support full and consistent funding for all land preservation programs, including Program Open Space Local and Rural Legacy, as derived from the real estate transfer tax. This sustained commitment is essential to safeguarding Maryland's natural resources and fulfilling the State's long-term conservation objectives. Thank you for your consideration of our position on this important topic.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
CALVERT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Handwritten signature of Earl F. Hance in blue ink.

Earl F. Hance, President

Handwritten signature of Todd Ireland in blue ink.

Todd Ireland, Vice President

Handwritten signature of Mark C. Cox Sr. in blue ink.

Mark C. Cox Sr.

Handwritten signature of Catherine M. Grasso in blue ink.

Catherine M. Grasso

Handwritten signature of Mike Hart in blue ink.

Mike Hart