



FREDERICK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Chairman Kumar P. Barve
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 11, 2021

LETTER OF SUPPORT HB 0399 - REAL PROPERTY - REQUIRED NOTICES FOR CONTRACTS OF SALE - ZONES OF DEWATERING INFLUENCE

Dear Chairman Barve,

The City of Frederick supports HB 0399. There are approximately 134 properties in the City of Frederick that lie within the Zone of Dewatering Influence as designated by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) in 2000. When first identified and mapped, property owners received written notification from MDE that their property was in the ZOI. However as of this writing, Maryland SDAT records show more than 115 of those 135 have transferred at least once. No required notice by owners exists for purchasers of property in the ZOI.

Several sinkholes have occurred in the City of Frederick within the ZOI. As a result of sinkholes on Hamilton Avenue in Frederick, two residential homes were damaged and ultimately condemned and demolished. Thankfully, no one was injured or killed. The house next door to the north is owned by Habitat for Humanity and held in an affordable housing land trust.

Sinkholes are a real concern in the ZOI. Potential purchasers should have the information about the ZOI to assess it prior to purchase, and to acquire adequate insurance if purchased. A required disclosure to potential purchasers would provide this crucial information.

The City of Frederick urges you to vote in support of HB 0399.

Sincerely,

Michael O'Connor
Mayor