



**Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville  
SB 157: Municipalities – Charter Amendments – Notice  
Support**

The Mayor and Council of Rockville thank Chair Feldman and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee for the opportunity to provide comments on *SB 157: Municipalities – Charter Amendments – Notice*. We are grateful to Senator Waldstreicher for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Rockville Mayor and Council strongly support SB 157, as this legislation would provide needed relief for the City and other municipalities faced with increasingly high costs to notice proposed Charter Amendments, public hearings on planning and zoning issues, budgets, and other City business. It is unfortunate that no local newspaper has continued in Montgomery County and therefore the only option available to meet the noticing requirement is to place these legally required ads in a regional print newspaper which is quite expensive due to the limited options.

For Fiscal Year 2023, Rockville has already spent \$8,000 on legal noticing costs and the small size of the ads placed in the newspaper's classified listings can be easily overlooked. Fiscal Year 2022, Rockville spent more than \$16,000 on legal noticing costs. SB 157 begins to address these issues by expanding charter amendment noticing options to include a copy of a fair summary of the proposed charter amendment delivered either by hand or mail once to every municipal residence. Under SB 157, the requirement can also be met by including the notice in a newsletter or any other regular municipal publication.

SB 157 is a welcomed improvement to a costly, antiquated, and inefficient process. The Bill supports greater transparency and community engagement and would permit Rockville and other municipalities to expend more of our taxpayer resources on high-quality programs and services. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to provide SB 157 with a favorable report.