

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
**COMMISSIONERS OF
ST. MARY'S COUNTY**



James R. Guy, President
Michael R. Alderson, Jr., Commissioner
Eric Colvin, Commissioner
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner
Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

**HB 28 - Constitutional Amendment - Form of County Government –
Requirement to Adopt Charter Home Rule**

OPPOSE

January 28, 2025

Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman
Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Korman:

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County **OPPOSE HB 28 - Constitutional Amendment – Form of County Government – Requirement to Adopt Charter Home Rule** which will be heard in the Environment and Transportation Committee. This bill would usurp local authority and local preference by forcing all of Maryland's counties – regardless of size and circumstance – to follow one form of government.

A one-size-fits-all approach to the structure of county governments infringes on autonomy and flexibility in local governance. Local decision-makers and local voters are best positioned to know their home county's needs and the best means to address them. Allowing the entire state to choose the form of government for a particular county, regardless of how that county's citizens actually feel, is an unwarranted and troubling assault on local autonomy.

Important to note, St. Mary's Countians previously **voted to oppose a similar, though even less-sweeping, change**. In 2016, our citizens decisively voted in favor of keeping the traditional commissioner form of government when presented the choice to adopt code home rule.

It has been St. Mary's County's consistent position for years that matters of local governance should be left to local citizens. Changes should only come if approved by a local referendum. Accordingly, the Commissioners **OPPOSE HB 28 - Constitutional Amendment – Form of County Government – Requirement** and request an unfavorable report from the Committee.

Sincerely,
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY


James Randy Guy, President

CSMC/AB/tr
T:/Consent/2023/009

Cc: Senator Jack Bailey
Delegate Matthew Morgan
Delegate Todd Morgan
Delegate Brian Crosby
Commissioner Mike Alderson, Jr.
Commissioner Eric Colvin
Commissioner Michael Hewitt
Commissioner Scott R. Ostrow
David Weiskopf, County Administrator
John Sterling Houser, Deputy County Attorney