



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Rushern L. Baker, III  
County Executive

APR 05 2016

The Hon. Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.  
Senate President  
Maryland State Senate  
State House, H-107  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1924

The Hon. Michael E. Busch  
Speaker of the House  
Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, H-101  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21404-1924

Re: House Bill 1094 - Prince George's County - Video Lottery Terminal Proceeds - Use of Local Impact Grants - **OPPOSE AS AMENDED**

Dear President Miller and Speaker Busch:

The Prince George's County Executive and the Prince George's County Council are writing today with significant frustration regarding House Bill 1094, as amended. This bill alters the provisions of the law pertaining to the allocation of local impact grants as distributed under current law.

The original purpose of the local impact grant funding in Prince George's County was to be used toward public safety. This is as it should be. Communities most directly impacted would receive additional considerations by way of improved public safety support. Now, however, there is an amendment to the bill which dictates that no more than half of the amount specified may be used toward the public's safety, and that the other proceeds must be utilized for after-school and recreational activities. Further, an additional amendment requires the Local Development Council (LDC), a mostly non-elected body to designate the use of funds. We have strong reservations with these stipulations being added to the law, and therefore, completely oppose it.

Without doubt, this amended bill thoroughly disregards the power of the County Executive and County Council, provided under the Maryland Constitution, to appropriate funds that are under its authority pursuant to the Prince George's County Charter as ratified by the voters of this County. We find this to be unconscionable.

This bill, as amended, yields significant concern regarding seemed attempts at overriding executive and legislative authority and input on how funds are allocated within Prince George's County. As elected officials, the people of Prince George's County selected us to carry out several duties, which include the management of tax payer dollars. As currently amended, the bill now ignores the fundamental right we have to do so, and totally disregards the ability of our citizens to provide invaluable input during our budget process. This overstep promises to ensure reduced executive influence, and zero legislative oversight for a process that is meant to be thorough and well executed, completely circumventing the balance of power.

County Administration Building  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772  
Maryland Relay 711

One of the LDC's primary responsibilities is to provide public input on a multiyear plan for the disbursement of local impact grants and we support that role. This amendment completely dismisses the collaborative spirit set forth in current law that requires consultation between the LDC and County government. To now extend unilateral authority and power to the LDC to designate public funds is inappropriate.

While we appreciate the service of our citizens who serve on the LDC, they lack the accountability to the constituents of Prince George's County. Allowing non-elected bodies the opportunity to replace elected officials in the budgetary process is a dangerous message to send to our residents who put their trust in the Prince George's County Government to make the most fiscally sound decisions possible on their behalf. Empowering an appointed body in this manner is not only unsettling, it is also unprecedented.

Therefore the Prince George's County Executive and the Prince George's County Council strongly urge your **UNFAVORABLE** report on **House Bill 1094** and respectfully request your favorable consideration of our position.

Respectfully,



Rushern L. Baker, III  
County Executive  
Prince George's County



Derrick Leon Davis  
Council Chairman  
Prince George's County Council

cc:

Honorable Jim Rosapepe, Senator, District 21  
Honorable Jay Walker, Delegate, District 26  
Honorable Edward J. Kasemeyer, Senator, District 12  
Honorable Sheila E. Hixson, Delegate, District 20  
Prince George's County Council Members  
Robert J. Williams, Prince George's County Council Administrator  
William M. Hunt, Prince George's County Council Deputy Administrator  
Glenda R. Wilson, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive  
Nicholas A. Majett, Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive