



SB 878/HB 1116: Smarter and Fairer Growth for Maryland 2009

Environmental Challenge

How do we want our communities to grow and prosper in the next 20 years? Decisions about what, where and how we develop need to carefully account for the community assets that are most important to us and make sure we don't lose them. Maryland must improve the development process so growth does not come at the expense of existing towns and cities, farms, and open spaces. Thoughtful growth planning should focus development in areas with the infrastructure necessary to avoid creating new problems.

Bill Framework

The Campaign for Smart and Fair Growth supports new policies that will allow communities to make growth decisions that are right for their situation and needs, and that will protect and enhance community assets. Better and more effective design and planning will provide wide ranging benefits to every Marylander - more ways to get around, revitalized communities, homes affordable to more Marylanders, greater protection for our parks and open spaces, and development patterns that help clean-up the Chesapeake and Coastal bays.

The legislation would:

- *Establish specific and measurable performance standards to ensure that plans and actions of the state and local governments result in the most efficient use of land and scarce public funds, and the achievement of the state's planning visions;*
- *When performance standards are achieved, reward progress with the highest priority for state infrastructure expenditures, expedited permit reviews, and other state assistance;*
- *Encourage new housing that is affordable to a diverse population;*
- *Encourage economic growth that supports quality jobs near where people live;*

This bill compliments the Governor's "Smart, Green, and Growing" package of legislation:

- *Provide good data to track development plans (SB 276/HB 295)*
- *Update the growth visions that guide comprehensive plans (SB 273/HB 294)*
- *Ensure that comprehensive plans are followed (SB 280/HB 297)*
- *Create incentives for development around transit stops (SB 274/HB 300)*
- *Update and restore the Historic Tax Credit (SB 258/HB 309)*

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