



Senate Bill 217

Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund - Alterations

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 5, 2026

From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 217 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill modifies the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) by expanding the requirements for county plans. Additionally, SB 217 requires counties to consult with the Office of Social Equity on plan changes and report data on populations served and services provided.

MACo appreciates the bill's intent to clarify expectations and improve alignment with the Office of Social Equity (OSE). Counties are committed to transparency and accountability and do not object to reporting requirements that demonstrate how funds are being used to advance the Fund's core objectives. Counties are already taking meaningful steps to ensure that CRRF dollars are allocated equitably and effectively.

That said, several jurisdictions have not yet received funding or have been unable to expend funds locally due to unclear statutory definitions and restrictive eligibility criteria, particularly around what constitutes "low-income" communities and where, if at all, funds may be authorized for use. To date, counties have not received sufficient clarity, which has created uncertainty and delayed meaningful investments in communities.

SB 217 would require county plans to identify specific geographic areas and populations most affected by disproportionate enforcement of cannabis laws and to report data on populations served and services provided. While counties support the goal of demonstrating impact, overly rigid or narrow reporting requirements could create compliance problems and unintentionally restrict service delivery. Many community-based organizations serve overlapping populations that cannot be easily disaggregated, and programs often evolve over time in response to local needs. Static or highly specific reporting mandates risk becoming outdated quickly, leading to administrative burden, inaccurate or misleading data, and potential chilling effects on partnerships with community organizations.

Counties are already required to adopt local laws to implement CRRF programs and to ensure consistency with statutory requirements. MACo's proposed amendment would clarify that reporting to OSE should allow for reasonable flexibility where jurisdictions cannot narrowly define service populations or geographic boundaries, while still meeting the bill's underlying intent. This approach

ensures accountability without limiting counties' ability to adapt programs, respond to community input, or address emerging needs.

Counties remain committed to maximizing the impact of CRRF dollars and ensuring they reach communities most harmed by past cannabis enforcement. By preserving local flexibility and providing clearer guidance, SB 217 can better support effective, timely, and equitable use of these funds.

For these reasons, MACo respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for SB 217.

MACo Amendments for SB 217:

On page 5, in line 24, strike "GEOGRAPHIC" through "AND".

On page 6, in line 15, strike "5" through "PROVIDED".