



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject: Bond Initiatives Need to Be Better Justified

Dear Delegation Members,

The Howard County Citizen Association, HCCA would like to know details regarding the criteria used as to how the seventeen proposed Bonds totaling \$8.6 Million receive approval especially when reading the applications as the justifications are not well defined?

We are not against such organizations or entities receiving the proposed bonds but are clearly looking for taxpayers to be comfortable with what is being requested. We are looking for accountability and recommend the General Assembly Legislative Bond Initiative Request Form be revised to include specific line items associated with these applications. You and the public should be able to view such details to ensure our monies will be wisely spent?

For example, when reviewing the requests just look at the Asian American Culture Community Center as its only justification for their requested \$500,000 states, "Design and Build the Asian American Cultural Center." The Community Ecology Institute at the Green Farmacy Garden states, "They need an additional \$400,000" but no details. You can review the others as the details of proposed expenditures are not available. We strongly recommend that all bond requests contain detailed line items before you consider approval of such requests.

In addition, when looking at the Request Form stating, "Describe the Purpose and Reason for the Project" the contents on some are truncated because of the number of words when using an iPhone. You can't scroll down to obtain the remaining information. One has to access their desktop to review the full text.

One of HCCA's mission statements is to see that transparency and open government is prevalent. How can the Delegation approve these requests when the details are not prevalent?

We would appreciate the courtesy of your response on our concern.

Thank You.

Stu Kohn
HCCA President