



*THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS*

**SB 686 WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT**

**SENATE EHEA COMMITTEE**

**MARCH 2, 2010**

**OPPOSE**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, **opposes SB 686** which would require counties and municipalities to establish a stormwater user charge to fund local stormwater management act and would impose a flat fee for residential properties that must be less than the impervious surface tax imposed on commercial properties.

In 2002, Montgomery County established the Water Quality Protection Charge (WQPC) in order to fund the maintenance of residential stormwater facilities. At this juncture, Montgomery County officials are exploring how to increase revenues to the Water Quality program in order to comply with the County's MS4 permit requirements. Montgomery County has engaged many stakeholders, including members of the business community and the County's Water Quality Advisory committee on how best to approach this issue. In addition, the County has engaged consultants to provide advice on best practices in water quality throughout the Country and equitable methods of funding the \$133 million need to comply with the MS4 permit.

The Montgomery County Chamber would like to continue to work with our partners in County government to determine the best approach on this issue. We think a statewide mandate or "one size fits all" approach is not the best way to fund these important water quality programs. Both the programs and the funding solutions should remain with local governments.

For these reasons, we request an **unfavorable report on SB 686**.

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