

CHAPTER 755

(House Bill 1156)

AN ACT to repeal and re-enact with amendments, Sections 169(a), 169(d), 170, 171, 182, 184, 185, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 193, 199, 200, 203(a), 209, and 213 and to add new Section 216A to follow immediately after Section 216 of Article 25 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition, 1965 Cumulative Supplement), title "County Commissioners," subtitle "Public Watershed Associations," providing for the planning and carrying out of works of improvement for watershed protection, flood prevention, recreation, soil conservation, drainage, and/or the conservation development, storage, utilization, and disposal of water for all beneficial purposes in watershed and subwatershed areas of the State.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That Sections 169(a), 169(d), 170, 171, 182, 184, 185, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 193, 199, 200, 203(a), 209 and 213 of Article 25 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition, 1965 Cumulative Supplement), title "County Commissioners," subtitle "Public Watershed Associations," be and the same are hereby repealed and re-enacted, with amendments, and a new Section 216A be added the same to follow immediately after Section 216, and all to read as follows:

169.

(a) The board of county commissioners or the county council of the several counties of Maryland, and the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City, shall have jurisdiction, power, and authority to establish public watershed associations in their respective counties **[of]** or Baltimore City for the purpose of *constructing, operating, maintaining, and* carrying out works of improvement for *watershed protection, flood prevention, recreation, soil conservation, drainage, and/or* the conservation, development, *storage, utilization, and disposal of water for all beneficial purposes* in watershed or subwatershed areas **[including but not limited to flood protection, storage of water, adequate drainage facilities]**, and the protection of areas subject to sediment or erosion damages, and to cooperate with local, county, State, and federal agencies; and it is hereby declared that such *watershed protection, flood prevention, recreation, soil conservation, drainage and/or* the conservation, development, *storage, utilization, and disposal of water for all beneficial purposes* is a public benefit and conducive to the public health, safety, and welfare.

(d) As used in this subtitle the term "landowner" and "owner of land" shall mean any person, firm, or corporation, who shall hold title to, or shall have contracted to purchase, land which shall be benefited *and/or damaged* by the proposed works of improvement under consideration within a public watershed association organized or proposed to be organized under this subtitle.

170.

A petition signed by not less than one third of the landowners or by the owners of not less than one third of the land in a water-