



Maryland

Department of the Environment

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Serena McIlwain, Secretary Designate
Suzanne E. Dorsey, Deputy Secretary

February 15, 2023

The Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 473- Environment - Ambient Air Monitoring - Particulate and Fine Particulate Matter

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or the Department) has reviewed House Bill 473 and would like to provide some information on the bill.

Under the leadership of Secretary-Designee McIlwain, MDE continues to prioritize environmental justice and equity statewide. The Department will be looking at everything through an equity lens with the intent of leaving no one behind in Maryland. Accordingly, while MDE support's the general concept of the bill, the Department would like to develop its own clearly defined and data-driven strategy to address pollution in overburdened and underserved areas in lieu of implementing the requirements laid out in this bill. The Department is evaluating data from two, currently active hyper-local monitoring networks in the communities of Cheverly and Curtis Bay to help determine a holistic strategy that may best be implemented through future legislation or regulations. This includes potentially not only focusing on PM monitors, but multi-pollutant monitors to give a broader and more useful picture of the pollutants impacting our most vulnerable communities.

HB 473 is aimed at providing air quality information to communities with certain income criteria or communities that are considered overburdened or underserved. How this information is gathered and reported out to the public would, however, require significant resources within the Department and may not provide actionable information. The bill does not specify the type of sensors or monitors used, so the cost range reflects low-cost sensors to higher-cost monitors. As such, the Department cannot determine the actual amount of what the monitoring equipment would cost, which could range between \$50,000 - \$6,000,000.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor HB 473 during the committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at gabrielle.leach@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Leach

cc: The Honorable David Fraser-Hidalgo
Christopher R. Hoagland, Air and Radiation Administration