



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

HEARING DATE: 2/5/2025
BILL NO: HB 344
COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation
POSITION: Support
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Wilson (443) 721-6789

TITLE: Maryland Environmental Service - Membership of Board of Directors - Alterations

BILL ANALYSIS: HB 344 would remove the State Treasurer from the Board of Directors (Board) of the Maryland Environmental Service and add the Secretary of Planning or their designee in their place. The Secretary of Planning would then be held to the same rules around their membership as the State Treasurer is currently held to.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) supports HB 344. The work of the Maryland Environmental Service shares parallels with the work and focus MDP puts into the Sustainable Growth Subcabinet, sustainable growth practices, human well-being, environmental interests, and the growth of Maryland's economy. MDP also provides extensive assistance to local jurisdictions, ensuring they are benefitting from planning best practices which include the preservation of the environment and natural resources. This work and focus give the Secretary of Planning a uniquely informed perspective that will strengthen the efforts of the Board and help ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for all Marylanders.

Further, removing the State Treasurer from the Board allows them the opportunity to reprioritize other responsibilities such as the management of Maryland's 529 College Investment Plan. The Plan was transferred to the Office of the State Treasurer under chapter 113 of 2023, and the work in its management has consumed a large portion of the Office's time and attention.

It is for these reasons that MDP urges a favorable report on HB 344.