



House Bill 146

Environment – On-Site Wastewater Systems – Requirements for Inspection and Pumping Services and Implementation Dates

Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: January 29, 2026

From: County Commissioners of Worcester County

Worcester County opposes House Bill 146, as it puts a substantial burden on property owners as well as the county departments tasked with overseeing septic systems.

Besides the property transfer requirements, this bill would require septic system pumping and inspection at every tenant change, which will drive costs onto renters. Those increased costs will come at a time when the state is already experiencing a housing and affordability crisis.

House Bill 146 would also add significantly to the workload of the local department tasked with monitoring septic inspections. While the bill lacks definitions of key terms, such as “landlord” and “rental property,” adding to its ambiguity, it is obvious that it would push a variety of additional reporting requirements onto local departments.

There also exists the implication in the bill that pumping and inspections can occur separately. If so, there is no acknowledgement that each jurisdiction in the state has a policy to handle reports of septic failures and most repairs and all system replacements require permitting and oversight from the local delegated agencies. The capacity to track and follow-up on rental property septic inspections and pump outs with respect to tenant changes is beyond the scope of local rental housing program, which is in a different agency than the local delegated authority for septic, like most counties across the state. This would place additional responsibility onto county staffs or third-party providers and will likely add to property owner, and subsequently tenant, costs.

We urge you to provide House Bill 146 with an unfavorable report. Thank you.