M3, M4, M1

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CF SB 936

By: Delegates Lehman, Allen, Foley, Ruth, Stewart, and Terrasa

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2024 Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2

Environment - Wood Vaults - Authorization and Permit Requirements

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing a landowner whose land is subject to an agricultural land 4 preservation easement to use the land for the construction and use of a certain wood 5 vault under certain circumstances, notwithstanding the terms of the easement; 6 requiring a person to have a permit issued by the Secretary of the Environment 7 before the person installs, materially alters, or materially extends a certain wood 8 vault; applying certain provisions of law relating to permit requirements for certain 9 facilities, including landfills, to a certain wood vault, including requirements for public participation, financial assurance, and closure; specifying that an easement 10 11 approved by the Maryland Environmental Trust or acquired by the Rural Legacy 12 Board may allow for the construction and use of a certain wood vault; and generally 13 relating to wood vaults.

- 14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
- 15 Article Agriculture
- Section 2–513(a) and (b)(1)
- 17 Annotated Code of Maryland
- 18 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
- 19 BY adding to
- 20 Article Agriculture
- 21 Section 2–513(e)
- 22 Annotated Code of Maryland
- 23 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
- 24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
- 25 Article Agriculture
- 26 Section 2–513(e) and (f)
- 27 Annotated Code of Maryland
- 28 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



39

That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

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1
    BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 2
          Article – Environment
 3
          Section 1–601(a)
          Annotated Code of Maryland
 4
 5
          (2013 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
 6
    BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
 7
          Article – Environment
 8
          Section 9–101(a) and (j)(1), 9–201(a), and 9–501(a)
          Annotated Code of Maryland
 9
10
          (2014 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
11
    BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments.
12
          Article – Environment
13
          Section 9–101(j)(3), 9–201(e), 9–204(a), (c)(1), (d), (e)(1)(i), and (h), 9–204.2, 9–205,
14
                9-208(a), 9-209, 9-211, 9-212.1, 9-213, 9-214, 9-215, 9-220, 9-221(a),
15
                9–252, 9–314, and 9–501(n)
16
          Annotated Code of Maryland
          (2014 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
17
18
    BY adding to
19
          Article – Environment
20
          Section 9-101(m) and (n)
21
          Annotated Code of Maryland
22
          (2014 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
23
    BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
24
          Article – Natural Resources
25
          Section 3-201(a)(1)
26
          Annotated Code of Maryland
27
          (2023 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
28
    BY adding to
29
          Article – Natural Resources
30
          Section 3-201(d) and 5-9A-05(q)
31
          Annotated Code of Maryland
32
          (2023 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
33
    BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
34
          Article – Natural Resources
35
          Section 5-9A-05(a)
36
          Annotated Code of Maryland
37
          (2023 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)
38
          SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
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Article - Agriculture

2 2-513.

1

- 3 (a) Agricultural land preservation easements may be purchased under this 4 subtitle for any land in agricultural use which meets the minimum criteria established 5 under § 2–509 of this subtitle if the easement and county regulations governing the use of 6 the land include the following provisions:
- 7 (1) Any farm use of land is permitted.
- 8 (2) Operation at any time of any machinery used in farm production or the primary processing of agricultural products is permitted.
- 10 (3) All normal agricultural operations performed in accordance with good 11 husbandry practices which do not cause bodily injury or directly endanger human health 12 are permitted including, but not limited to, sale of farm products produced on the farm 13 where such sales are made.
- 14 (b) (1) A landowner whose land is subject to an easement may not use the land 15 for any commercial, industrial, or residential purpose except:
- 16 (i) As determined by the Foundation, for farm– and forest–related 17 uses and home occupations; or
- 18 (ii) As otherwise provided under this section.
- 19 (E) NOTWITHSTANDING THE TERMS OF AN AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION 20 EASEMENT ACQUIRED BY THE FOUNDATION BY PURCHASE, GRANT, GIFT, 21 DONATION, OR OTHERWISE, A LANDOWNER WHOSE LAND IS SUBJECT TO AN 22 EASEMENT MAY USE THE LAND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF A WOOD VAULT 23 AS DEFINED IN § 9–101 OF THE ENVIRONMENT ARTICLE.
- 24 **[(e)] (F)** Purchase of an easement by the Foundation does not grant the public any right of access or right of use of the subject property.
- [(f)] (G) An agricultural land preservation easement purchased under this subtitle shall be included as part of a partnership under the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program established under 10 U.S.C. § 2684a if:
- 29 (1) The land that is subject to an easement is in the vicinity of, or 30 ecologically related to, the Atlantic Test Range;

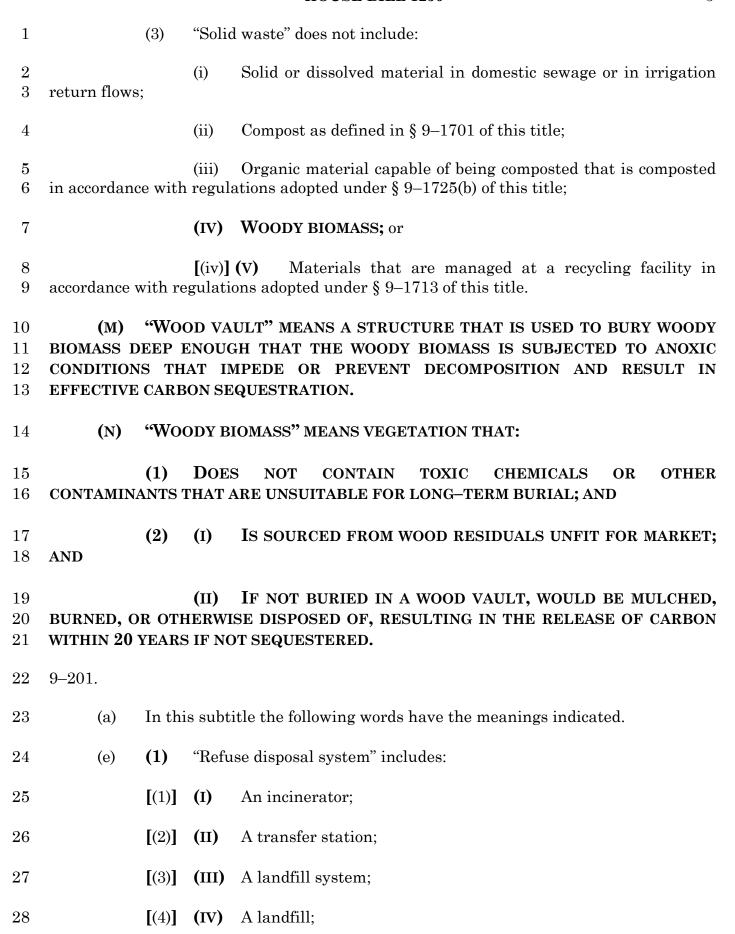
- 1 (2) The landowner whose land is subject to an easement agrees to any 2 restrictions imposed on the easement under the Readiness and Environmental Protection 3 Integration Program established under 10 U.S.C. § 2684a; and
- 4 (3) Funding is available to the Foundation to enter into an agreement under the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program established under 10 U.S.C. § 2684a.

Article – Environment

8 1–601.

7

- 9 (a) Permits issued by the Department under the following sections shall be issued 10 in accordance with this subtitle:
- 11 (1) Air quality control permits to construct subject to § 2–404 of this article;
- 12 (2) Permits to install, materially alter, or materially extend landfill systems, incinerators for public use, **WOOD VAULTS**, or rubble landfills subject to § 9–209 of this article;
- 15 (3) Permits to discharge pollutants to waters of the State issued pursuant 16 to § 9–323 of this article;
- 17 (4) Permits to install, materially alter, or materially extend a structure 18 used for storage or distribution of any type of sewage sludge issued, renewed, or amended 19 pursuant to § 9–234.1 or § 9–238 of this article;
- 20 (5) Permits to own, operate, establish, or maintain a controlled hazardous 21 substance facility issued pursuant to § 7–232 of this article;
- 22 (6) Permits to own, operate, or maintain a hazardous material facility 23 issued pursuant to § 7–103 of this article;
- 24 (7) Permits to own, operate, establish, or maintain a low-level nuclear 25 waste facility issued pursuant to § 7–233 of this article; and
- 26 (8) Potable reuse permits issued in accordance with § 9–303.2 of this 27 article.
- 28 9–101.
- 29 (a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.
- 30 (j) (1) "Solid waste" means any garbage, refuse, sludge, or liquid from 31 industrial, commercial, mining, or agricultural operations or from community activities.



- A solid waste processing facility; and [(5)] (V) 1 2 [(6)](VI) Any other solid waste acceptance facility. "REFUSE DISPOSAL SYSTEM" DOES NOT INCLUDE A WOOD VAULT 3 AS DEFINED IN § 9–101 OF THIS TITLE. 4 5 9-204.6 This section applies to any water supply system, sewerage system, WOOD (a) 7 **VAULT,** refuse disposal system that is for public use, or any refuse disposal system that is 8 a solid waste acceptance facility as defined in § 9-501(n) of this title if the solid waste 9 acceptance facility is installed, altered, or extended after July 1, 1988. 10 (c) (1) Before a person draws plans or submits an application under this 11 section for a proposed water supply system, sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse 12 disposal system, the person may submit to the Secretary a preliminary statement on the 13 proposed system. 14 A person shall have a permit issued by the Secretary under this section before (d) the person installs, materially alters, or materially extends a WOOD VAULT, water supply 15 system, sewerage system, or refuse disposal system. 16 17 An applicant for a permit shall: (e) 18 (1) Submit to the Secretary an application that contains: 19 (i) The complete plans and specifications for the installation, 20 alteration, or extension of the WOOD VAULT, water supply system, sewerage system, or 21refuse disposal system; 22(h) A person may not: 23Install, materially alter, or materially extend a water supply system, (1)24sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system in this State except in 25accordance with a permit issued to the person by the Secretary under this section; or 26 (2)Embody any material change in construction until the Secretary has 27 issued a revised permit based on the submission to the Secretary under subsection (e)(2) of
- 29 9–204.2.

this section.

28

- 1 In addition to the requirements of § 9–204 of this subtitle and Title 1, Subtitle 2 6 of this article, an applicant for a permit to install, materially alter, or materially extend 3 a landfill system **OR WOOD VAULT** shall give notice of the application by certified mail to: 4 The owners of all real property adjoining the site where the proposed (1) 5 project is located; 6 The chairman of the legislative body and any elected executive of the (2)7 county where the proposed project site is located; 8 (3)The elected executive of any municipal corporation where the proposed 9 project site is located; and 10 Any other county within 1 mile of where the proposed project site is **(4)** 11 located. 12 Any informational meeting required by § 1–603 of this article shall be held in 13 accordance with Title 1, Subtitle 6 of this article. 9-205. 14 In this section, "authority" means a water, sewerage, or sanitary district 15 (a) 16 authority. 17 (b) This section applies only to any water supply system, sewerage system, WOOD **VAULT,** or refuse disposal system that is for public use in this State. 18 19 (c) Any authority or person who owns a water supply system, sewerage system, 20 WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system or who supplies or is authorized to supply water, 21 sewerage, or refuse disposal service to the public shall submit to the Secretary: 22 (1) A certified copy of the complete plans for the water supply system, 23sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system that: 24(i) Is correct on the date of submission; and 25(ii) Is of the scope and detail that the Secretary requires; and 26(2)Any existing specifications of or reports on the water supply system, 27sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system.
- 28 (d) If plans do not exist or are of insufficient scope or detail, the authority or 29 person who is required to submit the plans shall:

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(1) Prepare and submit to the Secretary new or supplemented plans; and

- 1 (2) Make any investigation that is necessary to ensure that the new or 2 supplemented plans are correct. 3 (e) The Secretary may request any other information about the water 4 supply system, sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system, including 5 information or records on maintenance and operation, that the Secretary considers 6 appropriate. 7 Any authority or person to whom a request is made under paragraph (2)8 (1) of this subsection shall submit the information or records to the Secretary.
- 9 9–208.
- 10 (a) On request, the Secretary shall consult with and advise the owner, operator, 11 prospective owner, or prospective operator of an existing or planned water supply system, 12 drainage system, sewerage system, **WOOD VAULT**, or refuse disposal system with respect 13 to the existing and future needs of all persons and communities that may be affected on 14 any of the following aspects of the system:
- 15 (1) The most appropriate source of water;
- 16 (2) The best method of assuring the purity of the water; and
- 17 (3) The best method of disposing of drainage, sewage, or refuse.
- 18 9–209.
- 19 (a) The applicant shall give notice of the application, the informational meeting, 20 and hearings:
- 21 (1) To the public in compliance with Title 1, Subtitle 6 of this article;
- 22 (2) By certified mail to the board of county commissioners or the county council of any county and the chief executive of any county or municipal corporation that the Department determines may be affected by the incinerator for public use, WOOD VAULT, or landfill system, including any county or municipal corporation within one mile of the property line of the proposed incinerator for public use, WOOD VAULT, or landfill system;
- 28 (3) To the Department of Natural Resources, by certified mail;
- 29 (4) By certified mail to each member of the General Assembly representing 30 any part of:
- 31 (i) A county in which the landfill system, WOOD VAULT, or 32 incinerator for public use is located; or

- 1 (ii) A county within 1 mile of the property line of the proposed 2 landfill system, **WOOD VAULT**, or incinerator for public use;
- 3 (5) To record owners of real property within 1,000 feet of the property line 4 of the proposed incinerator for public use, **WOOD VAULT**, or landfill system, by certified 5 mail to the addresses of record owners as indicated in the records of the State Department 6 of Assessments and Taxation; and
- 7 (6) By posting a notice of the application, the informational meeting, and 8 hearings in a conspicuous space on the site of the proposed incinerator for public use, **WOOD VAULT**, or landfill system.
- 10 (b) The local officials notified under subsection (a)(2) of this section shall give 11 notice of the application, the informational meeting, and hearings to all interested agencies 12 of their respective jurisdictions.
- 13 (c) To the extent practicable, the Department and other units of the State 14 government shall consolidate the informational meeting and hearings concerning permits 15 for the same landfill system, WOOD VAULT, or incinerator for public use.
- 16 9–211.
- 17 (a) (1) Except for a sanitary landfill that is subject to § 9–211.1 of this subtitle, 18 and as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, before the Secretary issues a permit for 19 a landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station to any private person, the 20 applicant for the permit shall:
- 21 (i) File with the Department a bond on the form that the 22 Department provides; or
- 23 (ii) Deposit with the governing body of the local jurisdiction where 24 the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station will be located cash, negotiable 25 bonds of the federal government or this State, or any other security that the Department 26 approves.
- 27 (2) The Secretary may adopt regulations to exempt any legitimate 28 recycling or reclamation facility from the requirements of this section.
- 29 (b) (1) The obligation of a bond filed under this section shall be so conditioned as to be void on the closing of the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station in a manner that prevents erosion, health and safety hazards, nuisances, and pollution.
- 32 (2) The local governing body that receives a deposit of cash or other security 33 under this section shall hold the security in trust in the name of the local jurisdiction to

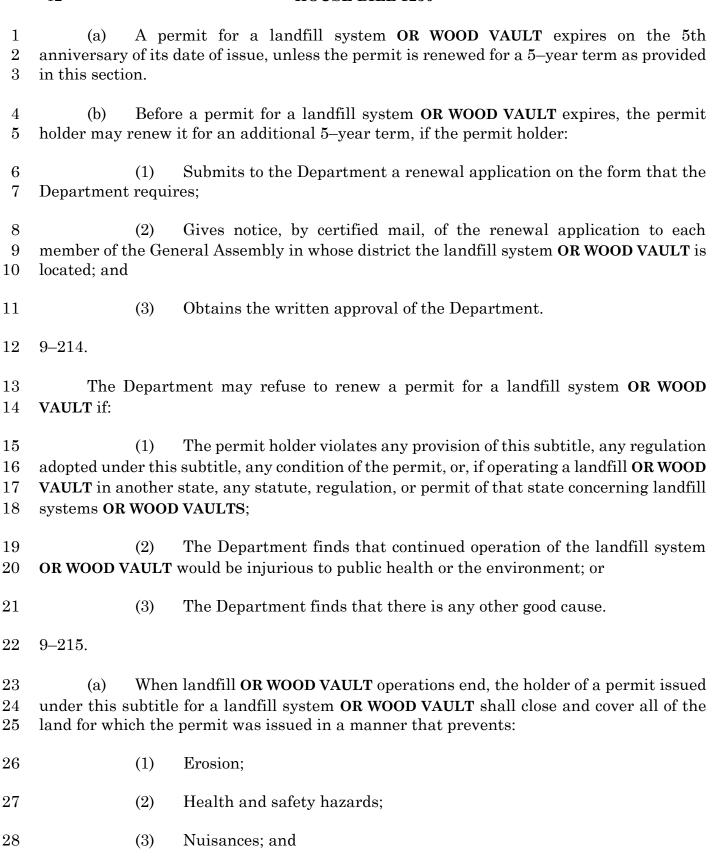
- assure the closing of the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT,** or transfer station in a manner that prevents erosion, health and safety hazards, nuisances, and pollution.
- 3 (c) A bond filed under this section shall be payable to the governing body of the 4 political subdivision where the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station will 5 be located.
- 6 (d) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, for a landfill:
- 7 (i) Unless otherwise required by federal law or regulation, a bond 8 filed under this section shall be in the amount of \$10,000 for each acre of land to which the 9 permit applies, but not less than \$250,000;
- 10 (ii) Cash deposited under this section shall be not less than the 11 amount specified in item (i) of this paragraph; and
- 12 (iii) The market value of other security deposited under this section shall be not less than the amount specified in item (i) of this paragraph.
- 14 (2) For an incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station, the Department shall establish the amount of the security required by this section.
- 16 (3) (i) This paragraph does not apply to a rubble landfill.
- 17 (ii) For sanitary landfills that are restricted to acceptance of land clearing debris specified in regulations of the Department, a bond filed under this section shall be in the amount of \$2,000 for each acre of land to which the permit applies, with a minimum amount of security of \$25,000.
- 21 (e) Both the applicant for a permit and a corporate surety licensed to do business 22 in this State shall execute any bond filed under this section.
- 23 (f) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, the term of any bond filed under this section and the time during which cash or other security must remain on deposit under this section is:
- 26 (i) The duration of the operation of the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD** 27 **VAULT,** or transfer station; and
- 28 (ii) An additional 5 years after the closing of the landfill, incinerator, 29 **WOOD VAULT,** or transfer station.
- 30 (2) If the Department has assurances that the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD** 31 **VAULT,** or transfer station has been closed in a manner that prevents erosion, health and 32 safety hazards, nuisances, and pollution, the Department may release the security filed or

- deposited under this section before the end of the 5-year period specified in paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection.
- 3 (g) (1) The obligation of the holder of a permit for a landfill, incinerator, **WOOD**4 **VAULT,** or transfer station and of any corporate surety under the bond shall become due
 5 and payable and any cash, securities, or bond proceeds shall be applied to payment of the
 6 costs of properly closing a landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT,** or transfer station only if the
 7 Department:
- 8 (i) Notifies the permit holder and any corporate surety on the bond 9 that the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT,** or transfer station has not been closed in a manner that prevents erosion, health and safety hazards, nuisances, and pollution;
- 11 (ii) Specifies in the notice the deficiencies in the closing that must be 12 corrected;
- 13 (iii) Gives the permit holder and the corporate surety a reasonable 14 opportunity to correct the deficiencies and to close the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, 15 or transfer station in accordance with the regulations of the Department; and
- 16 (iv) Authorizes the local governing body to close the landfill, 17 incinerator, **WOOD VAULT**, or transfer station in accordance with the regulations of the 18 Department.
- 19 (2) The local governing body shall use bond proceeds, cash, or the proceeds 20 of other security to pay the cost of properly closing the landfill, incinerator, **WOOD VAULT,** 21 or transfer station.
- 22 9–212.1.
- The Department may deny an application for a permit for a sanitary landfill system OR WOOD VAULT to any nongovernmental person if:
- 25 (1) The owner of the land, the operator, or the applicant has violated:
- 26 (i) Any law of this State or any other state concerning sanitary 27 landfills **OR WOOD VAULTS**; or
- 28 (ii) Any regulation or permit condition of this State or any other 29 state concerning sanitary landfills **OR WOOD VAULTS**; or
- 30 (2) The Department finds that operation of the sanitary landfill system **OR** 31 **WOOD VAULT** would harm public health or the environment.
- 32 9–213.

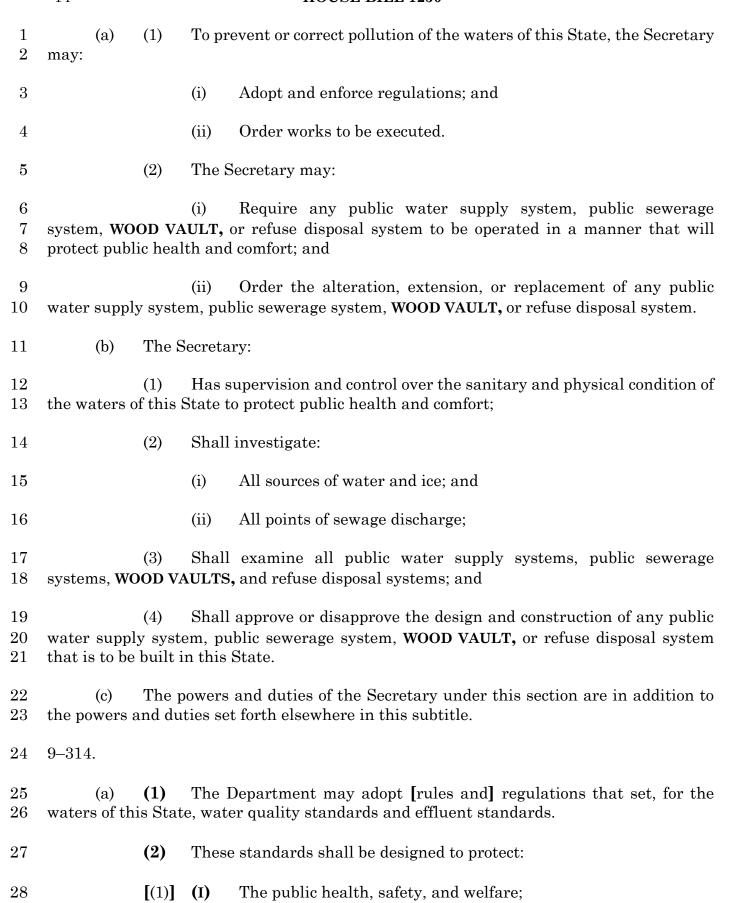
29

(4)

Pollution.



- 1 (b) The Department shall adopt regulations that set standards for the closing and 2 covering of landfill systems **AND WOOD VAULTS**.
- 3 9–220.
- 4 (a) The Secretary shall order the owner or person in charge of a water supply system, sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system to correct the following improper conditions, if, after investigation, the Secretary determines that, because of incompetent supervision or inefficient operation, the water supply system, sewerage system, WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system:
- 9 (1) Is not producing reasonable results from a sanitary viewpoint;
- 10 (2) Is a menace to health or comfort; or
- 11 (3) Is causing a nuisance.
- 12 (b) The order shall require that the water supply system, sewerage system, 13 WOOD VAULT, or refuse disposal system produce specific, reasonable results within a time 14 that the Secretary sets.
- 15 (c) (1) If the water supply system, sewerage system, **WOOD VAULT,** or refuse disposal system does not produce the required results within the time that the Secretary sets, the Secretary may order the owner or person in charge to appoint, within a time that the Secretary sets, a person approved by the Secretary to take charge of and operate the system in a manner that will secure the results demanded by the Secretary.
- 20 (2) The person who is served with an order under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall pay the salary of the person who is appointed in compliance with the order.
- 22 9–221.
- 23 (a) If, after investigation, the Department determines that any water supply system, sewerage system, **WOOD VAULT**, or refuse disposal system is a menace to health or comfort or is causing a nuisance, and that conditions cannot be improved sufficiently only by changing the method of operation, the Department may order the owner:
- 27 (1) To alter or extend the water supply system, sewerage system, **WOOD** 28 **VAULT,** or refuse disposal system; or
- 29 (2) To install a new water supply system, sewerage system, **WOOD VAULT**, 30 or refuse disposal system.
- 31 9–252.



- 1 Present and future use of the waters of this State for public water [(2)](II)2 supply; 3 [(3)](III) The propagation of aquatic life and wildlife; [(4)]Recreational use of the waters of this State; and 4 (IV) 5 [(5)] (V) Agricultural, industrial, and other legitimate uses of the waters 6 of this State. 7 (b) The [rules and] regulations adopted under this section shall include at least 8 the following: 9 Water quality standards that specify the maximum permissible short 10 term and long term concentrations of pollutants in the water, the minimum permissible 11 concentrations of dissolved oxygen and other desirable matter in the water, and the 12 temperature range for the water. 13 Effluent standards that specify the maximum loading or concentrations 14 and the physical, thermal, chemical, biological, and radioactive properties of wastes that 15 may be discharged into the waters of this State. 16 Definition of technique for filling and sealing abandoned water wells 17 and holes, [for] disposal wells, [for] deep mines and surface mines, WOOD VAULTS, and 18 [for] landfills to prevent groundwater contamination, seepage, and drainage into the waters of this State. 19 20 Requirements for the sale, offer, use, or storage of pesticides and other 21substances that the Department finds to constitute water pollution hazards. 22Procedures for water pollution incidents or emergencies that constitute (5)23an acute danger to health or the environment. 24Provisions for equipment and procedures for monitoring pollutants, 25collecting samples, and logging and reporting of monitoring. 26 Effluent standards set under this section shall be at least as stringent as those 27specified by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. 289-501.
- 30 (n) **(1)** "Solid waste acceptance facility" means any sanitary landfill, 31 incinerator, transfer station, or plant whose primary purpose is to dispose of, treat, or 32 process solid waste.

In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

29

(a)

1 (2) "SOLID WASTE ACCEPTANCE FACILITY" DOES NOT INCLUDE A WOOD VAULT AS DEFINED IN § 9–101 OF THIS TITLE.

3 Article - Natural Resources

- 4 3–201.
- 5 (a) (1) There is a Maryland Environmental Trust established to conserve, 6 improve, stimulate, and perpetuate the aesthetic, natural, health and welfare, scenic, and 7 cultural qualities of the environment, including, but not limited to land, water, air, wildlife, 8 scenic qualities, open spaces, buildings or any interest therein, and other appurtenances 9 pertaining in any way to the State.
- 10 (D) AN EASEMENT APPROVED BY THE TRUST MAY ALLOW FOR THE 11 CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF A WOOD VAULT AS DEFINED IN § 9–101 OF THE 12 ENVIRONMENT ARTICLE.
- 13 5–9A–05.
- 14 (a) **(1)** A sponsor may file an application to designate a Rural Legacy Area in accordance with a schedule established by the Board.
- 16 **(2)** A local government may not apply for or approve an application for a Rural Legacy Area designation inside another jurisdiction's boundaries without that jurisdiction's approval.
- 19 (Q) AN EASEMENT ACQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE MAY ALLOW FOR THE 20 CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF A WOOD VAULT AS DEFINED IN § 9–101 OF THE 21 ENVIRONMENT ARTICLE.
- 22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the General Assembly:
- 23 (1) finds and declares that wood vaults are a useful tool to address the 24 climate crisis; and
- 25 (2) encourages local governments to minimize permitting burdens on the 26 construction of wood vaults, in a manner similar to other agricultural best management 27 practices.
- SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 5 years and, at the end of June 30, 2029, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.