



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

Board of Environmental Health Specialists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
Phone: 410-764-3512

**2020 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL NO: HB 1484
COMMITTEE: Appropriations
POSITION: Support

TITLE: State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Fees – General Fund

BILL ANALYSIS:

This legislation repeals the provision of the law creating the State Board of Environmental Health Specialists fund. In addition, it requires the State Board of Environmental Health Specialists to pay revenues into the General fund of the State.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

The Board of Environmental Health Specialists (Board) supports HB 1484, which includes the transfer of the Board's funding source from Special fund to General fund.

In FY 2013, based on recommendations from the Department of Legislative Services' (DLS) 2011 sunset review report, the legislature transferred the Board of Environmental Sanitarians from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) to the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and renamed the Board as the Board of Environmental Health Specialists. At that time, the Board's fund source went from the General fund to the Special fund. The funding change was made despite the recommendation of DLS to maintain the Board's General fund status.

For FY 2018 and FY 2019, the Board accumulated a total deficit of \$67,117. The projected special fund deficit is expected to increase to unsustainable levels in the upcoming fiscal years.

Currently, all health occupations boards are prohibited from increasing fees or instituting additional fees. Even if the Board could increase its fees it would not be practical for this licensing base. The typical licensees are highly trained public-sector employees who earn modest salaries. Unlike other health care providers that typically work in a private practice and can adjust the revenues to make up for increased licensing fees, these licensees have little or no

discretion on setting their salaries. The Board believes that a significant fee increase could result in fewer individuals entering the profession and would further add to existing recruitment and retention problems for agencies employing these positions.

Changing its funding mechanism from special-funded to General-funded would help provide funding to the board, as well as cut costs while not passing on additional costs to licensees. General-funded boards do not pay rent or indirect costs to the Maryland Department of Health, etc. and generally have a lower administrative overhead.

Thank you for considering this testimony. The Board of Environmental Health Specialists is respectfully requesting a favorable report on HB 1484. For more information, please contact James Merrow, Executive Director Board of Environmental Health Specialists at 410-764-3512 or james.merrow@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.