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BILL NO.: SB 371

TITLE: Environment - Drinking Water Outlets in School Buildings -
Testing for Elevated Level of Lead

SPONSOR: Senator Carter

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 11, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 371 – Drinking Water Outlets in School Buildings – Testing for Elevated Level of Lead. This bill requires that lead tests be conducted in public schools once every 18 months. The bill also creates a new standard for the definition of “elevated level of lead” to mean a concentration of 5 parts per billion, a stricter standard than the 15 parts per billion required by the EPA.

Lead exposure has been found to cause long-term physical and behavioral problems in children. Baltimore County supports efforts to reduce the risk of lead exposure to our children, especially in their critical stages of development when they are most vulnerable to the effects of lead exposure.

This bill ensures that Baltimore County Public Schools will monitor lead levels through regular testing. Current policy does not require regular testing of lead levels in public schools, which can be harmful to children who might be unknowingly exposed to lead in their drinking water at school. Creating a standard of 5 parts per billion will minimize exposure to this substance which has been linked to learning disabilities and lower IQ in children. These children will benefit from schools taking the proper steps to ensure that there is no collateral damage to them receiving an education.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 371. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, 443-900-6582.