

An Affiliate of  
the Maryland Association  
of Counties, Inc.



Reply to:

February 26, 2020

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB673 – State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Fees – General Fund

Dear Senator Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors (the Conference) **strongly supports SB673** as written with respect to repealing the existing State Board of Environmental Health Specialist Fund and directing future monies collected into the General Fund of the State.

The Licensed Environmental Health Specialists (LEHS's) are a dedicated but relatively small group of Public Health professionals who play a key role in implementing and overseeing a number of critical health and environmental issues, initiatives and regulations established by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), plus local jurisdictions. Ensuring safe public and private water supplies, proper food safety preparation, along with oversight of recreational venues are but a few of the important duties assigned to LEHS's.

Key to the continued level of professionalism, approval and oversight of training requirements, disciplinary determinations, along with general operations, rests with the Board of Environmental Health Specialists (the Board). In July 2012, when the Board was moved to the MDH Boards and Commissions, the Board was also moved out of general funds and into special funding. With a limited membership (approximately 550 LEHS's), using the special funding status to support its on-going and increasing operational costs results in undue risk and threatens the Board's existence.

The Conference believes that the ability to maintain and sustain the Board with adequate funding to meet existing balance shortfalls can best be achieved with the move out of a special fund obligation, and into a general fund payment and support structure. Accordingly, we request the Committee **SUPPORT SB673** as written.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter. If you have further questions concerning this written testimony, please contact me at 301-883-7602.

Respectfully,

Evelyn Hoban, President

Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors