



Maryland Arborist Association
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SB 867 - Allegany County and Garrett County - Definition of "Tree Expert" - Alteration

Committee: EHEA

Date: March 4, 2020

MGPA Position: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Arborist Association (MAA) is a professional trade association dedicated to fostering best practices within the region's arboriculture industry, providing education forums for on-going training and safety, and promoting community service through volunteerism. For nearly 50 years, the MAA has brought professional arborists (and related trades) together for networking, professional growth, and advancement.

MAA members are Licensed Tree Experts (LTE) certified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Currently, a person may not engage in the work or business of a tree expert or represent themselves to the public as a tree expert in Maryland without having received a license from DNR. To obtain a license, an individual must: be 18 or older; have two years of relevant college education plus a minimum of one year of experience or have three years of continuous experience with a licensed tree expert; pass a DNR examination; and pay a \$30 application fee.

Senate Bill 867 seeks to exclude a person in Garrett and Allegany County from the Licensed Tree Expert requirements if for the immediately preceding three years they have participated in the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Maryland Master Logging Program and been engaged continuously in the practice of timber harvesting.

MAA opposes SB867 because it creates a different standard for tree care workers in just two counties and degrades the integrity of the LTE program which tree care companies and workers in Maryland are currently complying with. Currently, there are approximately 1,300 licensed tree experts who have gone through the statutory process to become certified. The Maryland-Delaware Master Logger Program is a voluntary training and education program for loggers who work in Maryland and Delaware and is not administered by DNR. Additionally, the nature of logging work is significantly different than tree care. For example, tree care is often in proximity to houses, roads, and power lines, whereas logging is not.

MAA urges your unfavorable report.