



## House Bill 1540

### *Environment – Mold Inspections – Standards, Reporting, and Penalties*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: March 4, 2020

From: Alex Butler

The Maryland Association of Counties **OPPOSES** HB 1540. The bill would require local jurisdictions to conduct expansive annual mold inspections in many different buildings and facilities. In all jurisdictions, this would require the addition of significant new resources resulting in costly expenditures.

HB 1540 requires that local jurisdictions conduct annual mold inspections in all public and private school facilities, licensed childcare centers, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and rental dwellings. Baltimore City alone has 130,000 rental dwellings within their boundaries. The City estimates they would require a minimum of 130 new employees and upwards of \$3 million per year to carry out merely the rental unit portion of the requirements outlined in the bill.

Additionally, counties do not have units equipped or readily available to perform inspections for mold. Typically, local housing departments respond on a complaint-driven basis to concerns over moisture intrusion such as a leaking roof or leaking pipe that may cause the potential for mold. The Center for Disease Control does not recommend testing for mold as parameters for what should be labeled dangerous currently do not exist. The results can be difficult for people to understand and are often inconsistent and unrepresentative. The focus should be on identifying moisture problems in public buildings, which is an area that counties work to address.

The bill allows for inspections to be done by third parties or in conjunction with other inspections. Ultimately, the financial burden rests on local governments. HB 1540 would lead to costly expenditures for local governments without any guarantee of improved outcomes. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give HB 1540 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.