



HB878 - On-Site Wastewater Services - Regulation

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

March 17, 2021

Position: Favorable

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

Septic systems are complicated, vital systems that play a crucial role in the health and wellbeing of not only our waterways, but also people. As Maryland continues to grow, our understanding of soil types and processes expands, and our rain events intensify, it is important to have a septic industry that has the oversight and capacity to adapt to our changing landscape. For these reasons, Clean Water Action supports the creation of a licensing board for the industry.

Many industries have similar commissions and boards to regulate the members of their industry, including:

- Appraisers, Appraisal Management Companies, and Home Inspectors
- Barbers
- Cemeteries
- Interior Designers
- Elevator Safety Review
- Foresters
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVACR) contractors
- Home Improvement Contractors
- Locksmiths
- Electricians
- Plumbers
- Pawnbrokers

Ultimately, a septic system has the sole responsibility for treating hazardous waste coming out of a home or place of business. It is essentially a decentralized wastewater treatment plant and **needs to be designed, installed, and serviced properly for its specific conditions and flows**. The patchwork, decentralized system Maryland currently employs is not sufficient to regulate this industry. Having a licensing and regulatory board enables a consistent floor of regulations for the industry and continuing education requirements. The legislation does not preempt local authority to have localized requirements or licensing.

HB302 improves accountability to ensure proper design and workmanship in installation and maintenance and is a critical tool to safeguard against faulty designs and faulty installations that pollute our waterways and groundwater, and pose a public health risk.

Clean Water Action respectfully requests a favorable report on HB302 to create a licensing board for the Onsite Wastewater Industry.

Thank you,

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