



**2021 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL: SB 70 – Environment – Mold Inspections – Standards, Reporting, and Penalties

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

POSITION: Letter of Opposition

BILL ANALYSIS: SB 70 would require the Department of the Environment, in consultation with the Maryland Department of Health and other state agencies, to adopt regulations establishing uniform standards for mold assessment and remediation and requiring local jurisdictions to conduct annual mold inspections of public and private school facilities, licensed child care centers, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and rental residential buildings and to submit annual reports of inspections conducted to the Department, require registry of certain inspectors, establish a penalty system for violations, and for the Department to perform other related requirements.

POSITION RATIONALE: The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) is a consistent champion of health for all Maryland residents. Although we applaud the sponsor’s aim of improving indoor air quality, because of a lack of accompanying funding to carry out the inspections and activities adequately, MACHO submits a **letter of opposition to SB 70**.

Local jurisdictions will be required to carry out annual mold inspections of 1) public and private school facilities, 2) licensed child care centers, 3) nursing homes, 4) assisted living facilities, and 5) rental dwellings, a massive undertaking for already severely understaffed and underfunded departments who due to that understaffing and underfunding, struggle to meet their current environmental health requirements, mandates and delegated authorities from MDE and MDH.

Adding all of these additional facility inspections to LHDs, will require significant increases in number of personnel, technical training in a field unfamiliar to many of our staff, and increased responsibilities for already over-tasked local supervisors. As public health professionals, we take our responsibility to protect the health and safety of the residents in our communities very seriously. It is demoralizing when we lack the resources to carry them out to the level of quality, we expect of ourselves.

LHDs value efforts to improve health and environmental conditions in all facilities. However, if LHDs are expected to carry out those assurance activities, they must have adequate resources to do so to meet all state agency mandates.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers submits this **letter of opposition for SB 70**. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaioral@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*