

DANA M. STEIN
Legislative District 11
Baltimore County

Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation
Committee

Subcommittees
Chair, Environment
Natural Resources,
Agriculture and Open Space



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3527 · 301-858-3527
800-492-7122 Ext. 3527
Fax 410-841-3509 · 301-858-3509
Dana.Stein@house.state.md.us

The Maryland House of Delegates ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Delegate Dana Stein in Support of HB 109 – Maryland Swimming Pool and Spa Standards Adoption

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

In this committee, we have adopted a number of building standards over the years. We approved the International Energy Conservation Code, authorized adoption of the International Green Construction Code, and have made changes to the International Residential Code. These codes are all developed and updated by the International Code Council (ICC), which is the recognized source for building codes and standards.

The Code Council, in collaboration with the Pool and Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA), has also developed the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC), which this bill would adopt for the State. HB 109 establishes minimum regulations for *newly constructed* public and residential pools, spas, and hot tubs using prescriptive and performance-related provisions.

This code is needed because while most Maryland jurisdictions have some form of existing pool and spa regulations, the State lacks a comprehensive code that addresses design, construction, and safety of pools and spas.

This is fundamentally about safety, especially the safety of children. According to a 2015 Maryland Department of Health report, drowning was the 2nd leading cause of death for children aged 0-4 and the third leading cause of death for children aged 5-14.

The code enhances pool safety in many ways, including stronger residential barrier requirements and the elimination of conditions that lead to entrapment incidents. These standards are best practices that are proven to reduce drowning fatalities.

By adopting a statewide code, the State will ensure that pools and spas are governed by a consistent code, which will foster compliance for businesses and additional safety for consumers.

Note that counties will be able to amend the code to fit their needs, but the critical point is that everyone will work from the same code.

Fourteen other states have taken steps to mandate adoption of this code statewide, including most of our adjoining states. Seven Maryland jurisdictions have already adopted this code, most notably Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County, and Baltimore City.