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Education, Health, and  
Environmental Affairs Committee

Joint Audit Committee  
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB268: Pesticide Regulation - Transfer to Department of the Environment**

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 | 1:30 pm

Pesticides are toxic; they have dangerous environmental and health impacts. More than three-quarters of the Chesapeake Bay's tidal waters are polluted by these contaminants. They affect the nervous and endocrine (hormone) systems and can cause cancer. Pesticides were also a key factor in the loss of 52% of Maryland's honeybee population in 2020-21.

In Maryland, millions of pounds of pesticides are used each year. Other than agricultural purposes, pesticides are commonly applied in homes, office buildings, parks, hospitals, athletic fields, etc.

Our government has a moral obligation to make thoughtful and well-informed decisions about pesticide use. Currently, oversight of more than 14,000 pesticide products is solely within the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA). [SB268](#) would move pesticide regulatory authority to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), which is tasked with safeguarding the environmental health of Maryland and its residents. MDE's duties currently encompass the enforcement of environmental laws and regulations, including [regulating hazardous chemicals](#). The needed expertise to regulate pesticides already exists within the Department.

A critically important requirement of this legislation is that MDE collaborate and get feedback from MDA and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). In this way, we can ensure a balanced perspective on agriculture, environment, and public health in the regulation of these toxic chemicals.

In consultation with MDA and MDH, MDE can ensure the safe and effective use of pesticides in Maryland. **I urge a favorable report on SB268.**