



House Bill 1052

*Public Safety – Natural Gas and Liquefied Propane Piping Systems –
Construction Requirements (Flynn and Laird Act)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: March 31, 2022

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1052. This bill would update Maryland building standards to require modern, safer, materials in replaced or repaired gas lines. In addition to promoting safer buildings generally, this change will protect first responders who may enter the building during a fire or structural crisis, compromising the integrity of these systems and elevating that safety risk.

Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services firefighter Nathan “Nate” Flynn died in the line of duty in 2018 while operating at the scene of a house fire in Clarksville. Frederick County Fire Captain Joshua Laird died in the line of duty in 2021 after responding to a house fire in Ijamsville. In both cases, gas lines ruptured, which made the fires significantly more dangerous.

The vast majority of gas leaks are the result of problems with unsafe materials used in pipes that pump natural gas to residential and commercial buildings. As such, HB 1052 would require pipe that is made of nongalvanized steel with a dark iron-oxide coating on the surface or arc-resistant jacketed corrugated stainless-steel tubing for construction of gas piping systems in new residential and commercial buildings.

Counties believe that this bill will help to protect the health and well-being of the first responders who put their lives on the line every day to protect our shared constituents. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1052.