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HEARING DATE: March 1, 2022

BILL: HB1114

TITLE: Charles County - Blighted Property - Special Property Tax Rate

SDAT POSITION: Letter of Information

The State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) finds HB1114 to be in violation of Article 15 of the Maryland Constitution, as applying a different tax rate to "blighted property" in Charles County is in violation of the uniformity provision.

HB1114 carves out a special tax rate to "blighted property" in Charles County. In order to do this constitutionally, the bill must first create a separate, well-defined subclass of real property that is "blighted" in Maryland (Tax - Property Code Ann. § 8-101). Otherwise, the blighted property will fall into the classification of all other real property and would therefore be taxed similarly. See *Lane v. Supervisor*: "Accordingly, Article 15 'requires that the same standard of value or economic yardstick must be used in making assessments within the same subclass. Greyhound, 271 Md. at 590.'"

The Department further notes that "blighted" is nebulous as it is nearly impossible to define.

For these reasons, SDAT offers this Letter of Information and strongly urges a reconsideration of HB1114 in its current form.