



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 23, 2023

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: SB 512 – Drinking Water - Legionella Pneumophila Bacterium - Minimizing Growth and Transmission

Position: Oppose

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League opposes SB 512, which creates onerous and expensive requirements for water suppliers, many of which include municipalities.

Under this measure, a municipal water supplier would be required to: maintain a detectable residual disinfectant level of chlorine in the water distribution system; conduct sampling and analysis of residual disinfectant concentrations to determine the residual disinfectant level of chlorine at all points in the distribution system at frequent and regular intervals. The bill also establishes onerous notice, sampling, and analysis requirements that apply when water distribution system disruptions occur, including notifying the public no less than 4 hours after a contamination occurs.

Many of these requirements are redundant. MDE is already responsible for ensuring that the water quality and quantity at all public water systems meet the needs of the public and are in compliance with federal and State regulations. Public water systems are also required to sample and monitor for a variety of contaminants on a routine basis, and to notify relevant parties when the water exceeds concentration levels of an unregulated contaminant. Expansions of current law, like the notice requirement, are onerous and unrealistic.

Under this measure, a water supplier must provide notice no later than four hours after a disruption and include details about the disruption, identification of the specific homes that are included, and how customers can protect themselves. This is valuable information but identifying every single home that is affected in a public notice is burdensome; further, gathering all of this information and synthesizing it for public distribution in under four hours is unrealistic and an inappropriate use of limited municipal resources, especially in a time-sensitive situation.

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For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that this committee provide SB 512 with an unfavorable report.

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