

Testimony in favor of HB 161

HB 161 requires a study be done of the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (Authority). I am writing in support of this bill that will evaluate the authorizing legislation, governance, and management practices of this agency.

The Authority, an Independent Agency is tasked by legislation for the efficient collection and disposal of waste on a regional basis and for the generation of energy and recovery of useable resources from such waste to the extent practicable.

I provided testimony to the Star Commission last year informing them that the Authority has virtually no oversight which is normal for other State agencies. Their authorizing legislation, which was developed in 1980, establishes a huge conflict of interest that allows County bureaucrats to, in effect, approve their own projects. The Authority is comprised of seven Counties, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Baltimore City. The respective trash Directors are appointed by the Authority and approved by the Governor to serve on the Board of Directors. These same individuals are also considered subject matter experts by County and City decision makers.

I believe the proposed study will evaluate the authorizing legislation to determine if it needs to be updated after 40 plus years, the structure of the Board of Directors, and determine whether the Board of Directors should be restructured by adding additional members who possess varied backgrounds.

R. Bruce Holstein
Comptroller Emeritus
U.S. Government Printing Office