



House Bill 161

Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority – Evaluation and Termination of Bond Authority (Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act)

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 8, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 161 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. The bill would prohibit the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority) from issuing new bonds beginning in June 2023 and require the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) to study whether the Authority should continue operations or be absorbed by another entity.

It is a smart exercise of public policy to analyze government processes to eliminate waste or discover more efficient ways to deliver public services. As responsible stewards of public funds, counties often conduct their own reviews and work to streamline where necessary. HB 161 seeks such an end, studying ways to either make the Authority more efficient or absorb the Authority into a new entity that can offer the same services at a reduced cost. Counties support the intent of HB 161 and suggest two friendly amendments to further this end:

1. The bill should fully ensure the continuation of services should the Authority be dissolved or somehow otherwise become unable to perform its obligations. While counties are flexible regarding the vehicle of service delivery, it is critical that there be no interruption to any current services provided by the Authority.
2. The Authority currently has a robust system for stakeholder engagement with its member counties. Counties ask that the DLS study include language examining ways that a new entity may be able to replicate a high level of stakeholder and intergovernmental engagement and direction.

MACo's amendments to HB 161 serve to ensure continuity of services and preserve robust stakeholder engagement should the Authority be absorbed. Accordingly, MACo asks for a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 161.