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HB 11 Private Well Safety Act of 2023

Education Health and Environmental Affairs  
Mathew Geckle Back River Precast  
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**Position: Favorable**

It is urgent that Maryland do more to test and protect private wells. 45 states have better well testing and safety program than Maryland. This puts rural Maryland at unnecessary risk from illnesses.

I want to focus on one large threat to our private wells. Septic systems. Most homes on wells also have septic. EPA estimates that at least 10% of our current 450,000 systems are failing. I can also attest that over the last couple years my calls for failing systems have skyrocketed. The combination of aging systems, poor design, or bad installation added to increased heavy rains and more people home instead of at work and school has played havoc on septic systems function.

Of course, the problem from failing septic systems extend beyond household sewage bubbling up in yards or basements. These failing systems are putting untreated waste into the ground and therefore, putting drinking water at risk.

As we now know many people have no idea that they must test their wells regularly. Maryland is not educating well owners on testing or making it simple to test.

Passing HB 11 will provide the education, financial help to make it easier to find out if the home's drinking water is safe. Equally importantly it helps to fund solutions to any contamination. This bill is urgently needed to protect rural Maryland's health and their investment in their homes.

We cannot simply pretend there is no problem because we are not testing for it. Almost every other state protects their residents better than Maryland.

I urge a favorable report.