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February 13, 2024

Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegate Charkoudian and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

The Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works writes this letter to oppose House Bill 101 - Removal, Relocation, and Adjustment of Utility Facilities for State Highway Projects.

As drafted, this legislation would have potentially significant financial impacts on Anne Arundel County if public water or sewer infrastructure were deemed an obstruction to a State Highway project. This legislation imposes requirements that could generate new design and construction/relocation projects for the County and which may not be in the best interest of Anne Arundel County's residents.

This legislation requires an unrealistic time frame, of 120 days, for responding to State work plans and only 60 days to begin relocating utilities once plans are approved. These time frames do not consider available funding, permitting, or procurement requirements associated with relocating public water and sewer utilities. The timing requirements also do not consider the design coordination that must occur between agencies.

The rate regulation portion of this legislation does not fully address existing laws and statutes related to prior rights or charges and assessments for public water and wastewater..

We appreciate your hard work in the General Assembly and believe that this legislation will create an onerous burden for our department. Unless there is an exemption for local jurisdictions who have existing public water and sewer utilities, Anne Arundel County DPW is opposed to House Bill 101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Henry".

Karen Henry
Director