



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

TESTIMONY

February 6, 2024

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: SB 572 – Environment - Collection and Reporting of Drinking Water and Wastewater Documents, Data, and Information - Requirements

Position: Support with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League respectfully opposes Senate Bill 572, which requires a water utility company to post on its website or share with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) its annual water quality consumer confidence report and related data. While MML agrees that publicly available drinking water and wastewater service information is important, the bill as drafted poses some burdensome mandates for local governments. We echo the Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies' (MAMWA) concerns on the following points:

- **Monthly and Annual Data Reporting.** This bill requires that the number of disconnected or terminated accounts be reported monthly. Our members already provide much of this information to the State quarterly, and simply don't have the personnel to do so more frequently. The same principle applies to the bill's annual CCR posting requirement: the annual deadline should align with each utility's fiscal year to ensure consistency and reduce administrative burdens.
- **Late Payments and Disconnections.** If this legislation aims to reduce *involuntary* service terminations, requiring utilities to include *voluntary* terminations is unnecessary and burdensome. Further, the bill requires a utility to share its policies regarding late payments and terminations, including the "events" that led to the charges or termination. "Events" is vague and should be defined.

MML's membership includes over 70 municipal water providers, all with different financial resources and staffing levels. Our municipal water utilities value transparency and continuity of service, but simply cannot comply with vague or onerous requirements. For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that the committee adopt these changes before granting Senate Bill 572 a favorable report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:



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