



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGERS AFFILIATE

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF SB 1060 / HB 1446 WITH AMENDMENTS

RAILROADS - SAFETY REQUIREMENTS (MARYLAND RAILWAY SAFETY ACT OF 2024)

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

MARCH 6, 2024

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo.) Emergency Managers Affiliate (EM Affiliate) **SUPPORTS with AMENDMENTS SB 1060 / HB 1446 – Railroads - Safety Requirements (Maryland Railway Safety Act of 2024).**

The Maryland Railway Safety Act of 2024 mandates the Commission of Labor and Industry to establish and maintain a database concerning the transportation of hazardous materials and waste via rail within Maryland. As currently written, this legislation mandates the Commission to notify only the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding database information (p. 2, lines 23-27).

However, it is important to note that local emergency managers and their offices also play a crucial role in coordinating response efforts and ensuring the safety of residents in their respective jurisdictions. Without access to timely and comprehensive information regarding hazardous materials transportation, their capacity to effectively plan for and mitigate risks may be limited. Therefore, the following amendment is proposed: Add local emergency managers (and by extension, their offices) to the list of organizations that the Commission must notify.

Granting local emergency managers access to this crucial information empowers them to better anticipate and address potential emergencies or disasters involving hazardous materials transported via rail. Additionally, by requiring the Commission of Labor and Industry to notify local emergency managers in addition to MDEM and FEMA, the bill would promote collaboration and information sharing among all stakeholders involved in emergency preparedness and response. This approach aligns with best practices in emergency management and would help contribute to the overall resilience of our communities.

The safety and security of our communities are paramount, particularly in the realm of hazardous materials transportation. By equipping local emergency managers with the necessary information and resources, we can enhance our collective ability to prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies involving hazardous materials. Thus, we urge the Committee to give **HB 1446** a report of **FAVORABLE with AMENDMENTS**.

Sincerely,

Preeti Emrick

Preeti Emrick

MACo EM Affiliate President