



An Affiliate of  
The Maryland Association of Counties, Inc.

To: Members of the Finance Committee

From: Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors

Maryland Association of Health Officers

Re: Senate Bill 222, State Board of Environmental Health Specialists- Quorum, Examination, and Apprenticeships

The Maryland Department of Local Environmental Health Directors (Conference), an affiliate of The Maryland Association of Counties, **SUPPORTS SB222**. In addition, the Maryland Association of Health Officers, (MACHO), the association of the state's twenty-four Health Officers who oversee the local environmental health programs in their local health departments, also a MACo affiliate **SUPPORTS SB222**.

This Bill will allow the State Board of Environmental Health Specialists (Board) to recognize an apprenticeship. In recent years there has been a depletion in the number of licensed environmental health specialists that provide the workforce at local health departments as well as at the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland Department of the Environment. The workforce issues have led to backlogs and extension to times to review and approve permits in some counties. The environmental health specialists are responsible for food inspections, well and septic system review, approval and inspections, pet store inspections, zoonotic disease control, sampling of local beaches, swimming pool inspections, camp inspections, mobile home park inspections as well as other programs that protect public health. The Board being able to recognize an apprenticeship program would start to build a future career path for

students that would be interested in the environmental health field. This would build up the workforce and fill vacancies that are needed at local health departments and at state agencies. Working with accredited colleges and universities an apprenticeship program in an approved baccalaureate program could be established and recognized by the Board.

Accordingly, we ask the committee to give SB222 a **Favorable** vote.

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