



**MARYLAND**  
*Association of*  
**COUNTIES**

## **Senate Bill 222**

### *State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Quorum, Examination, and Apprenticeships*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: January 30, 2024

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 222. This bill was wisely developed in collaboration with the Board of Environmental Health Specialists and includes insights from the Conference of Environmental Health Directors. As such, it should help accelerate the integration of entry-level Environmental Health Specialists into local departments, clarify procedures for the Board of Environmental Health Specialists, and streamline the examination process for licensure.

Environmental Health Specialists are needed every day in every jurisdiction to make sure communities have the appropriate resources to stay healthy and thriving. Their role includes ensuring the safety of life's essentials - food, water, and habitat. Unfortunately, workforce shortages in this field are creating precarious circumstances for these divisions locally, but the provisions in this bill have the potential to alleviate some of that strain. The bill does this by getting skilled workers on the job faster. The apprenticeship specifically will help eager, qualified employees hit the ground running in all counties to make sure crucial services are not interrupted and local teams can fill vacancies with greater speed.

By collaboratively streamlining the system that supports these roles, Environmental Health Departments across the state will have more tools at their disposal to fill vacant positions. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 222 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.