



*Wes Moore, Governor - Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor - Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary*

March 19, 2024

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk  
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee  
Room 241, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: Senate Bill 222 – State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Quorum, Examination, and Apprenticeships – Letter of Support**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of support for SB 222 – State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Quorum, Examination, and Apprenticeships. SB 222 amends the Health Occupations Article by defining and adding qualifications for an apprenticeship program, which prepares apprentices to qualify for the licensing examination administered by the Board of Environmental Health Specialists. It also authorizes the Board to adopt regulations defining the requirements for Board approval of an apprenticeship, and the minimum and maximum duration of an apprenticeship.

SB 222 addresses a critical workforce need in the State. For years, local health departments across Maryland have faced a shortage of qualified environmental health specialists. These highly trained and skilled professionals protect the health and safety of all Marylanders as the officials responsible for food safety, drinking water safety, and other environmental health programs. These essential public health workers are critical for business and economic development as the ones responsible for reviewing and inspecting wells and septic systems for local health departments.

There is currently no training pipeline for environmental health workers in the State. In response, the Department is working to create an apprenticeship program along with the Board of Environmental Health Specialists. SB 222 authorizes the Board to create new regulations for apprenticeships and for the minimum and maximum duration of apprenticeships, ensuring that apprentices participating in the program will be qualified to sit for the licensing examination.

The Department strongly supports the passage of SB 222. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at [sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott", enclosed within a white, irregular, hand-drawn border.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary