



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

TESTIMONY

February 25, 2025

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: SB 944 - Housing Development Permits - Local Reporting Requirements (Maryland Housing Data Transparency Act)

Position: Oppose

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (“MML”) respectfully opposes Senate Bill 944, which requires local governments that issue at least 50 building/development permits for new residential units every year to make monthly reports to the State on a laundry list of information. Municipalities favor transparency and are eager to be partners in solving the State’s housing crisis, but some of the requirements in this bill are confusing, burdensome, and/or logistically challenging.

This bill requires a local government to report significant information monthly for every residential building or development permit that was issued in the immediately preceding month. One of the data points required is the number and date of Use and Occupancy (“U&O”) permit issued. This assumes the U&O permit is issued the same month that the building/development permit was issued, which is grossly unrealistic. Local governments are also required to report the total cost of construction. Unless a local government is a party responsible for the development project, our members wouldn’t be privy to that information and therefore wouldn’t be able to comply with this requirement.

Not only are some of these data points difficult, if not impossible, to include, but the submission deadline is unreasonable. The monthly report is due to MDP on the first of the month for the immediately preceding month, meaning the report for January 2027 is due February 1, 2027. That only gives a municipality 1 day to finish collecting data and complete the report, which is unrealistic and may require the hardworking municipal employee responsible to work overtime if the 1st falls on a weekend or holiday.

Finally, local governments are required to publish these reports on their websites, but the bill is unclear regarding standards for those publications and whether local governments must make these reports searchable and interactive like MDP. Searchable and interactive websites and interfaces can be expensive to build and maintain, and our members are concerned that complying with this would dilute their already limited resources.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that the Committee provide Senate Bill 944 with an unfavorable report. For more information, please contact Angelica Bailey Thupari, Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs, at angelicab@mdmunicipal.org or (443) 756-0071. Thank you for your consideration.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.