



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

Senate Bill 176

Agriculture - Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan - Uses of Information

Position: Support
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Date: January 28, 2025
From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** SB176. This bill proposes amendments to Maryland's Agriculture Article regarding soil conservation and water quality plans. The Department of Agriculture would be authorized to use data from soil conservation and water quality plans for enforcement actions under Subtitle 8 of the Agriculture Title and statistical purposes. Such information may also be shared with MDE to support water quality issues. The aim is to enhance soil conservation and water quality compliance while maintaining data privacy.

MDE supports Senate Bill 176 due to its emphasis on transparency and enhanced coordination between agencies, which aligns with broader goals of protecting water quality and promoting environmental sustainability.

Accordingly, MDE requests a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 176.

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