



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

March 5, 2026

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support to House Bill 1444 –Washington County – On-site Sewage Disposal System
Regulations--Exemptions

Dear Chairman Korman:

The Board of County Commissioners (the “Board”) unanimously supports the passage of House Bill 1444, which would lessen the burdens of strict compliance with the Maryland Department of the Environment’s requirements regarding septic tank disposal systems in Washington County’s Agricultural (Rural) and Rural Village zoning districts only.

The Maryland Department of the Environment has promulgated certain regulations governing new on-site sewage disposal systems and non-community water supply systems, including replacements, additions, and repairs. The applicable regulations are found in COMAR 26.04.02.01 – .13. These regulations impose requirements on private properties owners concerning, among other things, the square footage disposal area, holding tank capacity, setbacks from water well systems and water supplies, and pump chambers and equipment criteria.

In the Agricultural (Rural) and Rural Village zoning districts, these requirements cause undue burdens on private property owners who, due to the unique characteristics of their lots (the size, shape, and grade), or the associated costs, cannot cause their septic systems to comply with the regulations. In particular, the setback requirements are physically impossible to comply with for many residents. Furthermore, despite the existence of various potential grant programs, those grants are generally unavailable to residents located in the two zoning districts specified above. Even if grant support were available, the high costs associated with coming into compliance would outweigh any such mitigation. Accordingly, it makes little sense to impose these regulations in the Agricultural (Rural) and Rural Village zoning districts in Washington County.

For this reason, the Board strongly supports the passage of HB 1444.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: 
John F. Barr, President

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