

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2018 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader**

Senate Bill 844

(Senator Conway)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environment and Transportation

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**Environment - Newsprint Recycling Board - Repeal and Transfer of Authority**

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This bill repeals the Newsprint Recycling Board within the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and transfers the board's responsibilities to the Secretary of the Environment.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MDE can implement the bill with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal or none.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law/Background:** The Newsprint Recycled Content Act (Chapter 301 of 1990) established the board and required MDE to assess the recycled content used by the newspaper industry as a whole. Each publisher is required to meet a statutory recycled content percentage for the total newsprint by weight that is used by the publisher. The recycled content percentage requirement is 40%. A newspaper publisher is authorized to apply to the board for an exemption from this requirement.

The board reviews applications for exemptions from the recycled content percentage requirement; reviews required tonnage reports from publishers; analyzes the availability and utilization of recycled newsprint; comments on the appropriateness of the recycled content percentage requirements and the continued need for the Act; works with

municipalities and other collectors of old newspapers to develop a reliable system to provide a stable and quality supply of old newspapers for recycling; works to encourage recycled newsprint production facilities; and works to encourage the reuse of old newspapers.

MDE advises that the board does not meet regularly. Additionally, MDE advises that there have been only two waiver requests in the past and that the board has never granted a waiver. According to MDE, the Maryland newspaper publishing industry, as a whole, has always been able to achieve the statutory recycled newsprint content requirement absent a waiver.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore, Charles, and Montgomery counties; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 21, 2018  
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