

An Affiliate of
the Maryland Association
of Counties, Inc.



Reply to:

DATE: February 24, 2022
TO: Members, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
FROM: Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors
RE: Senate Bill 479 – Environmental - On-site Wastewater Services - Regulation

The Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors (the Conference) **OPPOSES SB 479** regarding On-site Wastewater Services.

The Conference has worked with various stakeholders over several years in an effort to find common ground, identify trouble areas within the industry and seek reasonable solutions. We have exchanged ideas with Team Septic on various occasions and supported efforts to move forward with legislation that was narrower in scope. In 2021, we supported Senator Young's SB022, which passed and became statute requiring licensure of property transfer inspectors. That legislation tackled licensure in the area of the industry from which the most contentious issues arise. Additionally, some of our members attended various forums held by the Maryland Department of the Environment which were intended to solicit feedback from business owners and those working in this industry on how they would view a board and its impact on the industry. While some of the industry was in favor, most were simply in favor of the Department of the Environment setting and Local Health Departments implementing consistent standards for all aspects of industry and did not see the creation of a Board necessary. The Conference agrees with those in the industry that sought consistent standards from the Department of the Environment and consistent implementation of those standards.

Additionally, under section 9-11A-05. (B)(2), this Board can establish standards, in consultation with the Maryland Department of the Environment, that govern the industry at-large. We have great concerns about creating a Board to set standards and self-regulate an entire industry which has a substantial impact on the environment and public health. This amounts to a private sector intermediary of an incredibly important and nuanced industry the Conference simply cannot support

For these reasons, we ask that the committee given SB 479 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

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