



## House Bill 12

### *Bay Restoration Fund – Authorized Uses – Local Entities*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

Date: January 29, 2014

To: Environmental Matters Committee

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 12. The bill provides assistance to county governments for the administration of 2012 regulations from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on septic systems using best available nitrogen removal technology (BAT).

HB 12 would require the Comptroller to allocate from the septic system account of the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) a portion of the reasonable costs of a local public entity that MDE has delegated to administer and enforce BAT regulations. The total allocation for administration and enforcement purposes cannot exceed 10 percent of the total funds deposited in the septic system account.

MACo has consistently argued against the delegation of enforcement and administrative oversight responsibilities from MDE to county governments without commensurate resources to carry out the new responsibilities. HB 12 would alleviate some of the fiscal costs placed on those counties delegated by MDE to implement and oversee the BAT regulations.

Besides providing a measure of equitable financial assistance to affected county governments, the bill would help those counties to better oversee BAT septic systems. Better oversight will help maximize nitrogen reductions from the BAT systems.

In conclusion, MACo believes HB 12 provides affected county governments with needed resources to administer and oversee BAT septic systems. Improved oversight will translate into improved nitrogen removal. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 12.