



House Bill 57

*Public Safety – Maryland Building Performance Standards –
Adoption, Implementation, and Enforcement of Modifications*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: January 26, 2016

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 57. The bill would provide local governments with more time to review when the State adopts and modifies a new version of the Maryland Building Performance Standards (MBPS) and subsequently train its code personnel to properly enforce those changes.

The MBPS is the State's building code. Under current law, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) must adopt the International Building Code (IBC), including the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), as the MBPS. The Department has 12 months after a new version of the IBC is published to review the version, consider any modifications allowed under State law, and adopt that version along with any modifications. After adoption by DHCD, a local government has 6 months to understand, implement, and begin enforcing the MBPS and any modifications through its building code inspections.

HB 57 would increase the time DHCD has to review, modify, and adopt a new version of the MBPS from 12 months to 18 months. The bill also increases the time a local government has to implement and begin enforcing new and modified versions of the MBPS from 6 months to 12 months.

Several recent versions of the IBC have included major changes to building code requirements and the inclusion of the IECC has further increased the breadth and complexity of Maryland's building code. It takes time and effort for local building code personnel to review and understand these new changes as well as train inspectors to properly enforce them. HB 57 provides the needed time for proper training.

HB 57 does not expand the authority of DHCD or local governments to modify the MBPS. The bill merely provides more time for the State to review increasingly complex IBC and IECC changes before adopting and modifying them and for local governments to understand those modifications and train their code enforcement officials to properly enforce them. Accordingly, MACo would urge the Committee to give HB 57 a **FAVORABLE** report.