



BILL NO.: House Bill 511

TITLE: State Board of Environmental Health Specialists – Transfer of Responsibilities

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 21, 2012

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

CONTACT: Andrea Mansfield

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 511. This bill would transfer the State Board of Environmental Sanitarians from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and rename the board to the State Board of Environmental Health Specialists.

HB 511 is the result of a Sunset Review of the State Board of Environmental Sanitarians. Environmental sanitarians play a vital role in the protection of the public's health by performing inspections and investigations to secure compliance with environmental and health laws and regulations. The strong public health focus of this profession makes DHMH the ideal location for the Board's existence. As pointed out in the Sunset Report, the public health mission of DHMH is germane to the work of the State Board and most individuals working as environmental sanitarians are employed by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene or a local health department.

Although, this transfer was offered in the Sunset Report as an alternative approach, it has received broad based support from the Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors and the Maryland Association of County Health Officers, both of which are MACo affiliates. The Board itself also supports this move, along with DHMH.

MACo urges the Committee to give HB 511 a **FAVORABLE** report.