



## House Bill 703

### *Environmental Violations – Reporting Requirements*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 22, 2019

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 703. The bill imposes challenging reporting mandates on certain environmental enforcement requirements of local governments.

HB 703 would require a local jurisdiction that has been delegated to enforce sediment and erosion control laws and regulations to annually report to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on potential violations and enforcement actions related to: (1) sediment erosion control laws and regulations; and (2) building and grading permits. MDE must then post the information on its website along with an interactive map depicting the location of each violation.

The reporting requirements are significant but MACo believes most of the larger counties with delegated authority should be able to comply with modest cost and staff time. However, MACo is concerned about the burden the bill will place on smaller counties and municipalities that have fewer staff and technological resources.

For such jurisdictions, the bill's requirements will be costlier and more time-consuming. Without some form of assistance, these jurisdictions may struggle to comply with the bill's mandates. One possible solution would be for MDE to provide technical assistance to those local governments struggling with the reporting.

HB 703 creates a broad new reporting requirement that could be particularly onerous to smaller counties or municipalities with delegated authority. These jurisdictions could benefit from assistance from MDE. As introduced, however, MACo requests the Committee give HB 703 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.