



House Bill 1217

Public Health – Splash Pads – Regulations

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

Date: March 13, 2018

To: Health and Government Operations Committee

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1217. The bill allows for the local regulation of the sanitary condition of splash pads.

HB 1217 provides that the governing body of a county may adopt and enforce rules and regulations to govern the sanitary condition of splash pads and any sanitary feature connected to a splash pad. “Splash pad” is defined as an outdoor play area: (1) with sprinklers, fountains, nozzles, and other devices or structures that spray water; (2) in which water is not allowed to accumulate; and (3) that is not used for submersion of the human body.

Under current law, splash pads must meet the same regulatory requirements as public pools, including having certain design features for safety purposes. However, there may be other sanitary concerns (such as having restrooms within a certain distance of a splash pad) that are not currently covered.

MACo supports the idea of county governments having the authority to address the sanitary condition of splash pads and any sanitary feature connected to them. Counties are better able to tailor regulations to meet local concerns and issues, and avoid the potential drawbacks of a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

HB 1217 would allow county regulation of the sanitary condition of splash pads and connected sanitary features, better serving local needs. Accordingly, MACo requests the Committee give HB 1217 a **FAVORABLE** recommendation.