



BILL NO.: House Bill 1373

TITLE: Real Property – Foreclosed Property Registry

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 9, 2012

COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters

CONTACT: Andrea Mansfield

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1373. This bill would require the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to establish and maintain a foreclosed property registry and provide local government access. The bill also authorizes a local jurisdiction to enact a local law that imposes a fine of \$1,000 for failure to register.

The economy and the banking crisis have led to a large number of residential property foreclosures over the past few years. Although many actions have been taken to address foreclosures, the Governor appointed the Maryland Foreclosure Task Force in the fall of 2011 to examine these issues more closely. HB 1373 is a recommendation from this task force.

The purpose of the registry is to provide a mechanism to improve communications between State and local governments and those entities that are responsible for maintaining properties during what the Task Force called the “limbo period.” This is the period of time between a foreclosure auction and the recordation of the property deed.

Many times during this period, properties may fall into disrepair and the local government may not know who to contact to address these matters. This has resulted in increased costs for code enforcement relating to securing and maintaining a vacant foreclosure property. Once established, the registry would assist local officials with identifying parties responsible for the maintenance of the foreclosed property ensuring that properties are kept up until the deed is recorded for the purchaser.

For this reason, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 1373 and urges the Committee to give the bill a **FAVORABLE** report.