



BILL NO.: House Bill 1373
TITLE: Real Property – Foreclosed Property Registry
POSITION: **SUPPORT**
DATE: March 28, 2012
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
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 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 includes recommendation language 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 calls the “limbo period.” This is the period of time between a foreclosure auction and the recordation of the property deed.

During this period, properties often fall into disrepair and the local government responsible for addressing these matters does not know who to contact. The result is increased costs for code enforcement relating to securing and maintaining a vacant foreclosure property. Once established, the registry would assist local officials in identifying parties responsible for the maintenance, ensuring that properties are maintained until the deed is recorded for the purchaser.

The bill, as amended by the House, would provide for one foreclosed property registry, the State’s registry, and would preclude a local jurisdiction from establishing its own. Prince George’s County currently has a vacant residential property registry and maintenance process in place and is concerned that HB 1373 would displace their existing program. Prince George’s County may be seeking amendments to grandfather their existing program. MACo would support these efforts.

MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 1373 and urges the Committee to give the bill a **FAVORABLE** report with language to grandfather Prince George’s County’s registry program.