



## MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, INC.

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BILL NO.: Senate Bill 115

TITLE: Environment – Waterworks and Wastewater Works Certified Operators

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 28, 2012

COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters

CONTACT: Leslie Knapp Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 115. The bill would allow certain waterworks, wastewater works, and industrial wastewater works to eliminate the position of certified superintendent and instead have a certified operator serve in a similar capacity. The consolidation of the two positions must be approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the facility: (1) must serve fewer than 500 persons; (2) have minimal treatment requirements as determined by the MDE; and (3) employ no more than two operators.

State law has required that certain water and wastewater plants employ a certified superintendent since 1957. The requirement to also employ a certified operator was added in 1982. However, federal law only requires a certified operator and many adjacent states do not require a certified superintendent. In practice, MDE follows the federal requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The bill would remove the requirement to have a certified superintendent for a small water or wastewater works plant where having two certified individuals is redundant and unnecessary. According to MDE, there are approximately 149 county-owned or operated waterworks and 110 municipally-owned (county and municipality) wastewater works that could be affected by the bill. Counties would realize a cost savings with the reduction of unnecessary personnel.

SB 115 lessens the requirements of an outdated provision of Maryland law that is unnecessary to meet current federal water requirements, would potentially save county governments money by reducing duplicative personnel, and would not affect the operation of the eligible waterworks and wastewater works plants. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 115.