



**MARYLAND ASSOCIATION
OF COUNTIES, INC.**

BILL NO.: Senate Bill 413

TITLE: Courts – Service of Process – Increase in Sheriffs Fees – Distribution to Rental Allowance Program Fund

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

DATE: March 29, 2012

COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters

CONTACT: Leslie Knapp Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** Senate Bill 413. The bill would increase the various fees collected by sheriffs for service of process by \$10. The additional \$10 would go into a newly created Rental Allowance Program Fund within the Department of Housing and Community Development. Monies from the Fund must be used in support of the existing Rental Allowance Program. The Rental Allowance Program helps low-income individuals find or maintain housing by providing housing assistance payments.

The current service of process charges are inadequate to fund the actual costs that sheriffs incur when performing the duty. MACo believes that any fee increase should first be directed towards covering the costs incurred by the sheriffs' offices before creating a new funding stream for an entirely unrelated State program. While the goals of the Rental Allowance Program are admirable, the nexus between the Program and service of process fees is tenuous at best.

SB 413 seeks to increase service of process fees that do not currently cover the costs incurred by county sheriff offices. Instead of addressing the needs of those who actually perform the service of process duty, monies from this Fund would provide funding for an unrelated State program. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 413.