



## Senate Bill 447

### *Maryland Environmental Service – Collective Bargaining*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Finance Committee

Date: February 18, 2016

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 447. The bill would undermine the ability of the Maryland Environmental Service (MES) to deliver needed environmental services to local governments at a reasonable cost.

SB 447 would require the Maryland Environmental Service (MES) to recognize and deal with an employee organization that is elected as an exclusive representative of MES employees and collectively bargain.

As noted on the MES website ([www.menv.com](http://www.menv.com)), MES is a self-supporting fee-for-service agency that “provides services at competitive rates to government and private sector clients and works on projects including water and wastewater treatment, solid waste management, composting, recycling, dredged material management, hazardous materials cleanup, storm water services and renewable energy.” Maryland counties are major MES clients and in FY 2015, MES did \$38.4 million in business with various counties. This represented 27% of MES’ total income for that year.

As the bill’s fiscal note indicates, MES estimates it will likely have to charge an additional \$1.3 to \$3.4 million annually to local governments as a result of mandatory collective bargaining. This would undermine the unique role MES plays in assisting local governments to meet numerous federal and State environmental mandates.

SB 447 would apply mandatory collective bargaining rights to an independent state agency that provides many critical and low-cost services to county and municipal governments. The bill would increase local costs and potentially jeopardize the role of MES in providing these services. For these reasons, MACo recommends an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 447.