



Senate Bill 877

Underground Facilities Damage Prevention - Revision

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: February 25, 2020

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 877 as it presents the results of a two-year workgroup effort spearheaded by the Maryland Underground Damage Prevention Authority (the Authority). MACo participated as a member of this stakeholder workgroup.

SB 877 makes numerous changes to the Authority and the procedures governing the protection of underground facilities. Most notably from a local government perspective, the bill retains underground storm drain exemption with the compromise that newly installed, renovated, or restored underground facilities are required to be detectable or locatable beginning October 1, 2021.

Additionally, the bill strengthens the provisions for responding to an emergency excavation or demolition in a time sensitive manner. The bill requires the appropriate parties to respond and be on site no later than three hours from the transmission of an emergency ticket. In the event of an emergency, it is crucial that underground facilities are appropriately accounted for and marked to prevent or mitigate the loss of or injury to life, health, property, or essential public services.

MACo appreciates having had a seat at the table to voice our concerns and perspectives as these changes were developed. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 877.