

STATE OF MARYLAND
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
Shari T. Wilson, Secretary

BILL NO: SB 90

COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters

POSITION: Support

TITLE: Secretary of Agriculture- Farm Quarantine

BILL ANALYSIS:

This bill provides the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to establish a farm quarantine in the event of exposure by a radiological or chemical toxic material or agent or if the farm is infected or infested with a disease or pest. Before doing so, the Secretary of Agriculture must consult with the governor, the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Secretary of the Environment on issues of human health and the environment. The bill allows the Secretary of Agriculture to take and/or direct certain actions related to the quarantine.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: Support

MDE is the lead State Agency in the event of a radiological emergency. This bill addresses an ongoing concern MDE has over MDA's lack of authority to establish a farm quarantine in the event of exposure by a radiological or chemical toxic material or agent.

Currently the Secretary of the Environment has broad regulatory authority under Section 8-105 of the Environment Article, which provides that when the Secretary of the Environment finds that a radiological emergency exists, the Secretary may issue an order (1) stating that the emergency exists, and (2) requiring any action that the Secretary finds necessary to meet the emergency.

This legislation will allow for greater coordination between State Agencies to allow for a more comprehensive response in the event of a radiological emergency.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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