



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

March 11, 2014

The Honorable Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair
Members, Budget and Taxation Committee
Senate Office Building, Suite 2W
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **Senate Bill 903 – Tax Sales – Stormwater Remediation Fees – Temporary Prohibition**

Dear Chairman Kasemeyer and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of the Environment has reviewed Senate Bill 903, *Tax Sales – Stormwater Remediation Fees – Temporary Prohibition*, and would like to express our opposition to this bill.

Senate Bill 903 would prohibit a county or municipality from collecting penalties and interest on unpaid stormwater remediation fees if the fees are paid by July 1, 2023, and prohibits a tax sale of property before July 1, 2023 for unpaid stormwater charges. In effect, SB 903 would prevent counties subject to the stormwater management fee requirements of § 4–202.1 of the Environment Article from taking action against a property owner who fails to pay the fee until July 2023.

Establishing these collection restrictions on counties who are implementing the provisions of House Bill 987, which was passed during the 2012 Legislative Session, would decrease the effectiveness of these local programs and force them to find resources from other sources to make up for any lost revenue due to non-payment of local charges and fees. These jurisdictions are under Federal and State mandates to address nonpoint source water pollution that is negatively impacting local streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, and an adequately funded Watershed Protection and Restoration Program will be necessary to ensure that the county meets these mandates. SB 903 would undermine these efforts to restore the counties' local watersheds.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at jeffrey.fretwell@maryland.gov if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey K. Fretwell

cc: Robert M. Summers, Secretary
Jay G. Sakai, MDE, Director, Water Management Administration

