



## House Bill 1428

### *Code Counties - Legislative Procedure - Notice Requirements*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation  
Committee

Date: March 11, 2022

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1428. This bill will allow Maryland's code home rule counties to post pertinent updates and other information through more contemporary means: on their websites.

Public knowledge of the business of government is essential for an informed society and vibrant democracy. Many years ago, that meant placing pertinent updates in a newspaper of wide circulation. While our communication technology has advanced considerably since the first set of transparency legislation was enacted, our laws governing the subject have not. This bill would modernize local government communications by allowing Maryland's code home rule counties to post updates on their websites instead of in newspapers. This is an important innovation in our laws as newspaper circulation has largely declined if not vanished entirely.

Widespread availability of affordable internet access and free connection resources through public libraries and other providers render this option the modern functional equivalent to "general circulation." The modern citizen is much more likely to search the web for their local government than find a print edition of a newspaper for updates on what actions their representatives are contemplating on their behalf.

HB 1428 will bring local government communications into the twenty-first century, allowing counties to reach people where they are and avoid unnecessary expenses. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give HB 1428 a **FAVORABLE** report.