



Senate Bill 553

Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

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From: Dominic Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 553. This bill renews the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland, extending its charge to evaluate policy challenges and solutions regarding battery safety.

In 2024, MACo helped lead the effort to establish this Commission in response to strong county concerns about the increasing incidence of lithium-ion (LI) battery failures. As Maryland's economy and daily life become more electrified, LI batteries are embedded in a rapidly expanding range of consumer products. While individual failure rates may be relatively low, the growing volume of batteries in circulation increases overall exposure and the potential for incidents affecting public safety and local response systems. Counties appreciate the Commission's work to-date and agree that the policy and implementation work remains ongoing.

SB 553 extends the Commission's charge with making legislative, regulatory, programmatic, and other recommendations related to LI battery safety. The scope of this mission remains broad and includes:

- Best practices, standards, and guidelines:
 - To prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion battery fires in consumer, transportation, and utility applications;
 - To prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion fires at recycling facilities; and
 - For reusing, recycling, and decommissioning lithium-ion batteries;
- The viability of extended producer responsibility for lithium-ion batteries;
- Training, education, and other information to better inform the public regarding lithium-ion battery safety; and
- Any other global issues the Commission may consider useful for enhancing the safety and reuse of batteries in the state.

By re-empowering the Commission to develop clear, actionable recommendations, SB 553 will better position Maryland to protect residents, first responders, and public infrastructure as LI battery use continues to expand. As such, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 553.