



BILL NO.: SB 464
TITLE: Marilyn J. Praisner Safe and Earth-Friendly Roadway Act
POSITION: **OPPOSE**
DATE: February 24, 2010
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance
CONTACT: Andrea Mansfield

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** Senate Bill 464. This bill would authorize local jurisdictions to install or replace highway lighting (1) only if passive or reflective lighting does not address safety concerns; and 2) with lighting designed to minimize light pollution, veiling luminance ratio, and light trespass. The bill also establishes a waiver process and specifies duties for electric companies when installing or replacing highway lighting.

MACo fully supports practices to maximize energy efficiency and minimize light pollution. However, it is concerned with the mandatory nature of SB 464 and believes it could increase costs for replacing lights in some situations. For example, if a streetlight is knocked down because of an accident, a local jurisdiction would be required to replace the streetlight with a restricted upright unit, unless a waiver is requested. A restricted upright unit that matches the existing streetlight may not exist possibly forcing a jurisdiction to go to considerable expense to change all street lights in that section to restricted upright units. In this situation, MACo believes that a local jurisdiction should have the flexibility to replace street lighting without going through the waiver process.

MACo has discussed its concerns with the sponsor and proponents of SB 464 and understands that it is not the sponsor's intent to place onerous burdens on local jurisdictions. MACo is willing to work with the sponsor and Committee on amendments to give jurisdictions flexibility to replace lighting in certain situations, including those described above, without going through the rigorous waiver process.

For these reasons, MACo **OPPOSES** SB 464 in its current form, but is pleased to work with the Committee on amendments to address these concerns.