



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

LEGISLATIVE COMMENT

DATE: February 28, 2017 BILL NO.: SB 773

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 773- The Community Healthy Air Act

COMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

MDA POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

EXPLANATION:

Senate Bill 773, The Community Healthy Air Act, calls upon the Maryland Department of the Environment to conduct an environmental assessment of its compliance with state and federal air quality laws and regulations and the compliance of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) with those same state and federal air quality laws and regulations related to emissions of air pollutants

COMMENT:

SB 773 will be difficult in implementing, the collection of data through monitoring, would provide pollutant concentrations, however this information alone is not an assessment of the potential impacts those emissions may have on the health of anyone exposed to those pollutants. In order to do that you would need exposure and risk analyses by public health experts.

The results of any assessment, both from a pollutant concentration and public health impact perspective would not be transferrable to all CAFOs, as pollutant levels and their associated potential health impacts are a function of how a CAFO is managed, the distance to residences, the number of animal housing structures and their orientation, local topography and meteorological conditions. The more these conditions differ between the study operation and a non-study operation, the lower the value the study results may have on a non-study operation. The complexity of conditions of the proposed study, will require extensive resources that are not currently available within the Department of Environment or the Department of Agriculture.