Transparency Initiative

T1. Changing topics, the Maryland Public Information Act grants the public the right to access records and data about public business and how taxpayer funds are spent. The Act was passed 45 years ago in 1970. Many good government groups and public watchdogs say that the law needs to be updated because some important information affecting public health and civil liberties is not accessible to the public as the law originally intended.

Do you agree or disagree that the Maryland Public Information Act should be updated to allow better access to government-funded data and information?

Agree 84%
Disagree 6%
(Do not read): Not sure/Refused to say 10%

T2. Under the Act, individual agencies charge a fee for public records requests at a level they feel is needed to cover their administrative burden. Now there is a proposal to place a limit on the amount of these fees so they do not deter public records requests, and to establish an independent body to ensure agencies comply with Maryland's public information laws. Would you support or oppose legislation to limit fees and establish an oversight body?

Support 71%
Oppose 20%
(Do not read): Not sure/Refused to say 9%

T3. There is currently an exemption in the Maryland Public Information Act for agricultural operators that prevents the public from accessing their pollution control plans, even though agriculture receives taxpayer dollars to support those pollution control efforts. Some farmers say it would violate their privacy if the government were to disclose their pollution control plans. Would you support or oppose legislation to close this loophole and make agricultural pollution control plans available to the public?

Support 77%
Oppose 15%
(Do not read): Not sure/Refused to say 9%

T4. All things considered, how strongly do you support or oppose updating the Maryland Public Information Act? *(Read choices.)*

Strongly support 49%
Somewhat support 38%
  Total Support 87%
Somewhat oppose 5%
Strongly oppose 3%
  Total Oppose 8%
(Do not read):
Depends 2%
Not sure/Refused to say 2%