

RMC Legislative Committee  
Monday, February 19, 2018  
3:00pm-4:00pm  
Conference Call  
Meeting Minutes

Participants:

Odette Ramos, Co-Chair  
Bill Christopher  
Bob Zimmeroff  
Erroll Mattox  
John Hartline  
Alice Settle-Raskin

Steve McHenry  
Kelly Dudeck  
Senator Adelaide Eckardt  
Matt Teffeau

RMC Staff:

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director  
Meredith Donaho, Program Administrator

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:03 pm.

Minutes

The meeting minutes from the February 5, 2018 Legislative Committee were shared.

2018 Legislative Tracking

- HB372/SB277 - Maryland Metro Funding Act. The bill establishes the Maryland Metro Dedicated Fund Account in the Transportation Trust Fund and requires the Governor to include an appropriation in the annual State budget of at least a certain amount solely for grants to the Washington Suburban Transit District to pay the capital costs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. There was a question regarding if the bill will impact the restoration of highway user revenues to rural communities. More information will be obtained and updated at the next Committee meeting.
- HB716/SB266 - Maryland Health Care Commission - Mortality Rates of African American Infants and Infants in Rural Areas – Study. The bill requires the Maryland Health Care Commission, in consultation with the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and interested stakeholders, to conduct a study on the mortality rates of African American infants and infants in rural areas. Some preliminary data was shared, in Washington County, the infant mortality rate of African American infants is 29.2%, and in St. Mary’s County, it is 23.4%. The state’s average is 10.6%. The Committee agreed to submit a letter of information and speak to the sponsor to potentially include a representative of the RMC on the Commission.
- HB863/SB698 - State Board of Nursing - Advanced Practice Registered Nurses - Certification and Practice. This bill authorizes a nurse anesthetist to provide certain care, administer certain drugs, manage certain therapy, order and evaluate certain tests and studies, perform certain tests, and perform certain acts. The Committee agreed to provide written support testimony.

- HB870/SB1065 - Public Schools - Agricultural Education Programs. The bill encourages each county board of education to implement an agricultural education program that prepares students for successful careers and informed choices relating to certain systems and for opportunities in agriculture-related employment and higher education by providing instruction and developing skills in certain areas through certain integrated classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experiences, and leadership experiences and involvement in student organizations. The Committee agreed to provide written letter of support.
- HB961 - Department of Information Technology - Rural Broadband Service - Inventory and Mapping of Assets. The bill requires the Department of Information Technology to complete an inventory of certain State and local government assets on or before October 1, 2019; requires the Department to use a certain inventory to create a certain map; requires the Department to solicit input from local governments and Internet service providers on identifying certain unserved and underserved areas in the State; and requires the Department to make a certain inventory and a certain map publicly available on its website. The Committee agreed to provide written support testimony.
- HB1013/SB759 - Property Tax - Benefits for Agricultural Land - Exclusion of Solar Farms. The bill establishes that a certain special use value assessment of certain agricultural land does not apply to land used for the generation of electricity from solar energy. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill and to seek additional information.
- HB1055 - State Finance and Procurement - Chesapeake Bay Watershed States - Expenses and Contracts (Quit Polluting My Bay Act of 2018). The bill requires the Standard State Travel Regulations adopted under certain provisions of law to prohibit the reimbursement for travel expenses related to travel to a certain state for which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified two or more pollution source sectors at a backstop actions level of oversight. The Committee agreed to take no position.
- HB1116/SB1152 - Public Safety - Agritourism - Permit Exemption. The bill adds Carroll County to the list of counties that exempt agricultural buildings engaged in agritourism from a certain permit requirement. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring.
- HB1120 - Land Use - Zoning - Agritourism Activities. This bill requires a local jurisdiction to authorize, by local ordinance, resolution, law, or rule, certain agritourism activities and defines "agritourism activity" as an activity conducted on a farm that is offered to a member of the general public or to invited guests for certain purposes. The Committee agreed to submit written support testimony with amendment.
- HB1141 - Building Performance Standards - Agricultural Buildings Used for Agritourism – Exemption. The bill alters the application of certain provisions of law exempting agricultural buildings used for agritourism from a certain permit requirement to apply statewide. The Committee agreed to submit written support testimony.
- HB1229 - Agricultural Land Preservation Easements - Signs, Billboards, and Outdoor Advertising Displays. The bill authorizes a certain sign, billboard, or outdoor advertising display to be erected, displayed, placed, or maintained on land subject to an agricultural land preservation

easement notwithstanding the terms of the easement; and providing for the application of the Act. An amendment is expected to be made. The Committee agreed to submit written support testimony with amendment.

- HB1233 - Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Businesses Account – Funding. The bill requires that 1.5% of the proceeds of video lottery terminals at certain video lottery facilities be paid to the Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Businesses Account. The Committee agreed to submit written support testimony.
- HB1301 - Income Tax Credits – Poultry Houses – LED Lighting. The bill allows an individual a credit against the State income tax for certain expenses paid or incurred to purchase and install certain lighting systems on certain poultry houses. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill.
- HB1351 - Agriculture – Easements – Special Occasion Events. The bill authorizes a landowner to use a portion of the land subject to an easement to hold a certain special occasion event under certain circumstances. The Committee agreed to submit a letter of support.
- HB1389 - Home Sprinkler and Fire Safety Assistance Fund - Pilot Program. The bill establishes the Home Sprinkler and Fire Safety Assistance Fund to provide grants to offset the costs of installing a sprinkler system when purchasing a home and includes in the annual State budget a mandated appropriation of \$300,000 for the Fund. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill.
- HB1569/SB901 - Local Infrastructure Fast Track for Maryland Act. The bill authorizes the Office of Legislative Audits to perform an audit of local governments that receive a distribution of highway user revenues. The bill will include broadband, water and wastewater systems in infrastructure. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill and discuss it at the next meeting.
- HB1652/SB704 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Telemedicine - Assertive Community Treatment and Mobile Treatment Services. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Health, under certain circumstances, to include psychiatrists who are providing Assertive Community Treatment or mobile treatment services to certain Maryland Medical Assistance Program recipients in the types of providers eligible to receive reimbursement for health care services that are delivered through telemedicine and provided to Program recipients. The Committee agreed to submit written support testimony.
- HB1692/SB760 - Land Use - Solar Electric Generating Facility Siting - Prohibition on Contiguous Parcels of Agricultural Land. The bill prohibits the siting of a solar electric generating facility on contiguous parcels of productive agricultural land that have different owners; and applying the prohibition to charter counties and Baltimore City. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill.

#### Other Legislation

- SB1056 – Rural Health Collaborative Pilot. The bill establishes the Rural Health Collaborative Pilot in the Maryland Department of Health to lead a regional partnership in building a rural health care system that enhances access to and utilization of health care services designed to meet certain goals; establishes a Rural Health Care Collaborative Executive Committee; requires the Committee to appoint an Executive Director of the Collaborative; requires the Collaborative to direct the establishment of certain rural health complexes. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill, and will wait for more information.

Discussion of Maryland Opportunity Zones: Opportunity Funds are a new class of investment vehicles that aim to responsibly drive much-needed capital into distressed communities throughout the nation. “O Funds” will activate passive holdings by connecting investors to investment opportunities in Opportunity Zones. There are 526 census tracts in Maryland that currently qualify to be designated as zones that would receive additional investment due to changes in the federal tax code. The areas are concentrated on the Eastern Shore, Baltimore City, and some areas in Southern and Western Maryland. The Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Department of Commerce will recommend only 25% of the eligible areas to the Governor. The zones will be established for the next 10 years. Currently, there is no process for public comment to help the Secretaries and Governor choose the zone areas. The Community Development Network will be drafting a letter requesting a public comment period to help determine the zones. It was suggested that the Rural Maryland Council could sign onto the letter for support. A draft of the letter will be shared.

With no other updates, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:03 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, March 5, 2018, 3pm -4pm, Conference Call.