

RMC Legislative Committee
Monday, March 5, 2018
3:00pm-4:00pm
Conference Call
Meeting Minutes

Participants:

Odette Ramos, Co-Chair

Lindsay Thompson, Co-Chair

Don Mulrine

Mike Pennington

Erroll Mattox

Kurt Fuchs

Kimberly Kratovil

Josh Hastings

Lara Wilson

Alice Settle-Raskin

Steve McHenry

Senator Adelaide Eckardt

Matt Teffeau

RMC Staff:

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

Meredith Donaho, Program Administrator

Amanda Clevenger, Administrative Assistant

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

Minutes

The meeting minutes from the February 19, 2018 Legislative Committee were shared. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson requested changes to the minutes. No requests for changes were made. A motion was made for the minutes to be approved. The minutes were unanimously accepted.

2018 Legislative Tracking

- 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 in the last meeting to continue to monitor the bill. It was suggested that an amendment be included to allow solar for agricultural use. The Council will check with the administration prior to submitting a support with amendment.
- HB1229 - Agricultural Land Preservation Easements - Signs, Billboards, and Outdoor Advertising Displays. Support testimony was submitted. A cross-filed senate bill will be forthcoming.
- HB109 - HB109/SB821 – Community Development Program Act of 2018. Support testimony was submitted. An update was provided, the bill is currently being heard on the floor of the House.
- 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 is concern the bill will impact the restoration of highway user revenues to rural communities. There is a \$125 million mandate in the bill. The Committee will continue to monitor.

- HB807/SB516 – Transportation – Highway User Revenues – Distribution. This bill alters the distribution of funds in the Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Revenue Account (GMVRA) of the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) over two years beginning in fiscal 2020 to provide 86.8% to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and 13.2% to local jurisdictions distributed as follows: Baltimore City (8.9%) and municipalities (2.8%). The county distribution (1.5%) is not altered by the bill. The bill is moving in tandem with HB372/SB277. The Committee will continue to monitor 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. The bill may be withdrawn.
- HB1240 - Assisted Housing Preservation Act - Assisted Projects, Protected Actions, and Duties of the Department of Housing and Community Development. This bill applies the Assisted Housing Preservation Act to additional owners and properties. It also requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to (1) establish and maintain a database of specified properties in Maryland that receive federal or State housing subsidies (which must include information regarding expiration dates of any subsidies); (2) establish a mechanism for giving notice one year before a subsidy expires; and (3) establish a plan to preserve units in an assisted project as affordable housing for low-income residents when federal or State subsidies are due to expire. The Committee will continue to monitor the bill.
- SB709/HB923 - Environment - Water and Sewer Service. This bill authorizes a political subdivision, a sanitary commission, or an authority that provides water and sewer services to (1) develop and implement service affordability programs to assist homeowners having difficulty making payments for water and sewer services and (2) disconnect service to specified vacant property under certain circumstances. The bill has been favorable.
- SB1188/HB1767 - Wireless Facilities - Permitting and Siting. The bill prohibits a local government from entering into certain types of exclusive agreements under certain circumstances and authorizes a local government to impose certain rates and fees for certain purposes under certain circumstances. It was discussed that the bill should be amended for counties and charter governments to have a say in the permitting process. The Committee will submit a letter of information.

Other Legislation

- SB1029 - Oil and Gas Drilling and Production – Restrictions. This proposed constitutional amendment establishes new restrictions on the drilling or production of oil or gas in the State. The bill will be added to the tracking sheet and will continue to be monitored.
- SB885 - Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation - Condemnation of Land Under Easement. This bill modifies – for specified agricultural land preservation easements acquired by donation or approved for purchase on or after July 1, 2018 – the method of determination of the payment made to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) and other contributors to the original purchase of a MALPF easement, if the land under easement is subject to condemnation. The Committee agreed to provide written support for the bill.
- SB691/HB812 - Electric Facilities – Condemnation – Conserved Land. This bill prohibits the taking of conserved land by eminent domain under the certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) process for an overhead transmission line unless specified conditions are met. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill.
- SB695/HB773 - Electricity - Condemnation of Property or Rights for Overhead Transmission Lines - Public Service Commission Approval. This bill requires a person that has received a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the Public Service Commission (PSC) for the construction of an overhead transmission line to receive PSC approval to acquire any property or right necessary for the construction or maintenance of the transmission line through eminent domain. The Committee agreed to continue monitoring the bill.
- SB610/HB766 - Natural Resources - Forest Conservation Act - Standards and Requirements. This bill modifies the Forest Conservation Act (FCA) by (1) redefining what forests areas are priorities for retention and protection; (2) modifying the standards for approval of clearing of priority retention areas; (3) increasing the reforestation requirement for approved clearing of priority retention areas; (4) modifying the timing of the review of a forest conservation plan; (5) authorizing local governments to enter into agreements for tree planting; and (6) requiring the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to publish and periodically update an FCA technical manual. The bill will be added to the tracking sheet and monitored.

With no other updates, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:43 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, March 19, 2018, 3pm -4pm, Conference Call.