



RMC Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 15, 2021

Time: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Lindsay Thompson, Chris Benzing, Sherwin Wells, John Hartline, Tyler Patton, Lenny Pfeffer, Bill Christopher, Colin Dennis, Tony Thakur, Cassie Shirk, Steve McHenry, Senator Addie Eckardt, Bill Christopher, Gabby Leach, Susanne Zilberfarb, Alice Settle-Raskin, Kelly Dudeck, Delegate Mike McKay, Charlotte Davis, Amanda Clevenger, Dakota Matthews, and Megan D'Arcy.

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Lindsay Thompson welcomed everyone to the meeting at 2:00pm and conducted the roll call.

Review of February 8, 2021 Meeting

Ms. Lindsay Thompson asked if anyone had any changes, additions, or corrections to the 2/8/2021 minutes. There were none and the minutes were accepted as presented.

Bill Tracking

- *SB696/HB793 - Local Governments - Income Tax Disparity Grants – Amounts, Senate and House Hearings 2/17:* Mr. Colin Dennis with Senator Eckardt's office stated that both bills were overridden, and Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that no action was needed.
- *SB723/HB831 - Maryland Food System Resiliency Council, Senate Hearing 3/04. House Hearing 2/17.* Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that this bill establishes a Food Council at the State level and lays out who is on the council and the members of the council. Mr. Chris Benzing stated that the Committee should support it since the bill supports rural territories and farmers. Mr. Steve McHenry made a motion to support the bill, Mr. Chris Benzing seconded. Ms. Thompson asked if there were any further discussion or opposition. There were none. Approved to submit.
- *HB924 Real Property - Mobile Home Parks - Rent Increases, Hearing 2/19:* Participants learned that the bill was withdrawn by the Sponsor therefore discussion did not take place.
- *HB964 Vehicle Laws – Driving in Right-Hand Lanes – Interstate Highways in Rural Areas, Hearing 2/18.* The Committee decided by consensus to pass on this bill. Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that there is work being done on issues like this by a Coalition within the agricultural community and the State Highway DOT included a section in their 2025 Safety Plan specifically on agriculture.
- *HB815 - State Agricultural Land Transfer Tax – Application of Nonagricultural Use Reduction and Exemption, House Hearing 2/23.* Ms. Lindsay Thompson provided a background on the agricultural land transfer tax and stated that the purpose of this bill was to clarify certain exemptions from the State agricultural land transfer tax as they apply to transfer under a contract of sale dated on or after July 1, 2019. The Committee decided not to take a position on the bill.
- ~~*HB862 – St. Mary's County and Metropolitan Commission – Debt Limitations.*~~ Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this was not the correct bill and the bill is *HB682 – Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Thermal Biomass Systems, Senate Hearing 2/23 and House Hearing, 2/18:* Ms. Davis further stated that the Committee already supported the Senate companion, so no further discussion was needed.
- *SB830/HB1148 - Secretary of Health – School-Based Health Centers – Guidelines and Administration of Grants, Senate Hearing, 3/11 and House Hearing 3/2:* Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that the Council supports school base health care but we do not see many programs in rural areas. Ms. Davis further stated that we have learned that such services do improve health outcomes for children in rural areas. Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that the purpose of this bill is to

develop guidelines to support the expansion of school-based health centers. Ms. Davis stated that the challenge will be revolving around the funding for such expansion. Ms. Thompson asked the Committee if there were any strong feelings to support the bill. There were none. Ms. Thompson asked if there were objections to a pass. There were none. The Committee passed on the bill.

- *SB577/HB443 - Economic Development - Makerspace Initiative Pilot Program, Senate Hearing 2/23, House Hearing 1/28*: Ms. Charlotte Davis provided a background on maker spaces- a space dedicated to spark ideation in small business development. Mr. Tyler Patton stated that the Committee should support anything that does economic development in rural areas made the motion to support the bill, Mr. Chris Benzing seconded. Ms. Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any further discussion, any opposition. The Committee decided to support the bill and submit testimony on 2/23 and send a letter to the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee.
- *SB722/HB62 - Department of Small Business, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation – Established, Senate Hearing 2/23, House Hearing 1/28*: Ms. Lindsay Thompson provided a summary of the bill and participants provided input. Mr. Chris Benzing recommended no action be taken on the bill. Ms. Thompson asked if there was any opposition to taking a pass on the bill. There was none. The Committee passed on the bill.
- *HB384/SB474 - Real Property - Sale of Mobile Home Parks - Notice Requirements, Hearings Passed*. Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that this bill alters the time frame required by a mobile home park owner to notify the sale of the park to the residents from 5 days to 30 days. Ms. Thompson further stated that the Committee supported the bill last year and it passed the House but ran out of time in the Senate. Ms. Thompson stated that based on the Committee's policy, we will move forward an submit letters of support to the respective Committee Chairs.

Other

- *SB821/HB1232 – Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturer's Licenses and Off-Site Permits*: Ms. Kelly Dudeck requested support for this bill as it codifies some of the Executive Order privileges that came down from the State of Emergency as it relates to wineries, breweries, and distillers to deliver and ship product. Mr. Chris Benzing motioned to support the bill, Mr. Tyler Patton seconded. Mr. Sherwin Wells abstained. Ms. Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none and the Committee will support the bill.
- *HB1069 – Water Supply – Private Well Safety Program*: Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that the Delmarva Chicken Association at the Agricultural Stakeholders meeting asked the Committee to look at the bill. The bill establishes a private well safety program and associated fund at MDE to provide water quality testing and remediation. Committee members had concerns on the cost of the program, whether it was required or voluntary, and the related transfer tax. Ms. Thompson recommended to pass on the bill and asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee passed on the bill.
- Mr. John Hartline asked if the Committee was supporting SB51 - Tri County Council for Southern Maryland – Property Management – Southern Maryland Regional Agricultural Center. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that the Committee was not since there is a policy not to get involved in local issues.
- Ms. Charlotte Davis congratulated MARBIDCO on the \$2 million received in the relief act. Mr. Steve McHenry stated that they will be making small direct grants to oyster farmers and urban small farmers; livestock processing grants to help processors add capacity; grants to help sawmills to gear up or expand, retool; and additional support to the Maryland Market Money Farmers Market program.
- Ms. Lindsay Thompson stated that HB472- Agriculture – Use of Glyphosate – Prohibition was withdrawn from the sponsor.

Adjourn

Ms. Lindsay Thompson asked if there were any other item for the good of the order. Mr. Chris Benzing moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Tyler Patton seconded. Ms. Thompson thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 2:55pm.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 1, 2021, 2pm-3pm, Zoom Teleconference