



RMC Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, February 6, 2023

Time: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Committee Co-chairs Lindsay Thompson and Chris Benzing, Bill Valentine, Alice Settle-Raskin, Matt Tefteau, Janice Palmer, Gregory Padghm, Dan Rider, Kelly Dudeck, Scott Warner, Joe Hinson, John Hartline, Steve McHenry, Don Mulrine, Alyssa Hastings, Susan O'Neill, Debbie Bowden, Monique Snyder, Darren Jarboe, Rachele Franceschi, Josh Bollinger, Diana-Lynne Hsu, Susanne Richards, Cassandra Vanhooser, Josh Hastings, Jacinata, Susan Harrison, Amy Keller, Charlotte Davis, Megan D'Arcy, and Amanda Clevenger.

Legislative Committee Co-chair Lindsay Thompson welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 2:02pm. Co-chair Thompson asked Committee to review the minutes from January 23, 2023 meeting. **Don Mulrine made the motion to accept the minutes, John Hartline seconded it the motion. The January 23, 2023 were unanimously accepted.**

The Committee reviewed the bill tracking list and Co-chair Thompson explained the bill review protocol for the Committee. The following bills were discussed:

- SB282/HB289 – Maryland Forestry Education Fund-Establishment: Committee Recommendation – **RMC staff will reach out to DNR/Forest Service and will mirror their position if supported.**
- SB296/HB79-Housing and Community Development-Whole-Home Repairs Act of 2023. Committee Recommendation: **Monitor**
- SB327-Hunting, Wildlife Conservation, and Outdoor Recreation-Funding, Promotion, Management, Licenses, Permits, and Stamps: Committee discussed the challenges of the bill as it includes Sunday hunting and that may impact stakeholders. Committee Recommendation: **RMC staff will reach out to DNR and will mirror their position if supported.**
- SB408/HB442 - Income Tax-Subtraction Modification-Qualified Broadband Grants: Committee Recommendation: **Support**
- SB418/592-Property Tax-Agricultural Land and Improvements-Assessment: Committee discussed the challenges faced by several farmers that have had their taxes increase from agriculture to commercial due to value-added agriculture activities. Committee Recommendation: **Support**
- SB447-Anaerobic Digestion Workgroup: The Committee discussed RMC's work supporting anaerobic digestion on a farm in Cecil County. The bill also includes the President of the Board of Trustee of the Rural Maryland Foundation, or the President's designee to serve on the workgroup. Committee Recommendation: **Support**

- SB511/HB576-Health and Human Services Improvement Act of 2023. The Committee discussed this bill and the importance of focusing on people that do not have the means to get to their medical appointments. Committee Recommendation: **Support**
- SB534-Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2023. This bill extends the sunset on a bill to June 2025. The Committee discussed the importance of telehealth since transportation is limited in rural areas. A Committee member reported that St. Mary's libraries are adding telehealth booth. Ms. Diana Lynne-Hsu stated that another component of the bill is the payment part and parody of it extending to telehealth. Committee Recommendation: **Support**
- HB253/SB262-Environment-On-Farm Composting Facilities-Permit Exemption. This bill expands on farm composting. Committee Recommendation: **Monitor**
- HB473-Environment-Ambient Air Monitoring-Particulate and Fine Particulate Matter. The Committee discussed that this bill requires the states to install ambient stations by certain parameters – census tract. They felt that the fiscal note was going to be high. Committee Recommendation: **Monitor**
- HB503-Natural Resources-Greenspace Equity Program-Establishment. The Committee felt that this bill had good intentions but had concerns from DNR. Committee Recommendation: **Monitor**
- HB547-Family Prosperity Act of 2023. The Committee discussed the bill and they were concerned that there weren't any republicans on the bill. Committee Recommendation: **Support.**
- HB551-Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023. Committee Recommendation: **Support and Ms. Charlotte Davis will testify.**
- HB552-Economic Development-Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program and Fund (Innovation Economy Infrastructure Act of 2023). Committee Recommendation: **Support.**
- HB584-Income Tax-Food Donations by Qualified Farms-Extension (Farmers Feeding Families Act): Committee Recommendation: **Support.**

The Committee decided to meet next week, February 13, 2023 since the following Monday is a holiday. The Committee discussed upcoming events that included Rural Maryland Day and Taste of the Eastern Shore. The Committee reviewed the Rural Maryland Day agenda and talking points. Ms. Kelly Dudeck asked for the Committee to consider supporting SB448/HB595 Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturer's Licenses and Off-Site Permits. The Committee stated that they supported this bill in the past and would continue to support it.

Committee Co-Chair Chris Benzing asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Don Mulrine made the motion, Mr. John Hartline seconded it. The meeting ended at 3:06pm.