



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

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## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### LEGISLATIVE COMMENT

**DATE: February 6, 2019**

**BILL NUMBER:** SENATE BILL 132

**SHORT TITLE:** HORSE RACING AT FAIR HILL - UNION HOSPITAL ALLOCATION - REPEAL

**MDA POSITION:** INFORMATION

#### **EXPLANATION:**

With the improvements to the Fair Hill facility, steeplechase racing will be able to grow. This bill is needed to allow racing at Fair Hill to be self-sustaining as it develops, and to allow for improved and sustainable private and philanthropic support for the Fair Hill facility. The Union Hospital has already consented to be removed from status as named beneficiary.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Maryland's Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area stands poised for a much needed revitalization to equestrian facilities. These upgrades open the door for the state to see between \$20-\$30 million in economic impact annually through the much anticipated CCI5\* Competition and improved conditions for steeplechase racing.

The purpose of this legislation is to update a statute mandating proceeds from racing at Fair Hill be directed to Union Hospital. The hospital has consented to be removed as a named beneficiary. Removing the provision will allow for greater and continued private and philanthropic support for the state's asset, Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area.

The Fair Hill public private partnership, including Fair Hill Races/Cecil Co. Breeders Fair, Cecil County, the Cecil County Delegation, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Sports Commission, Fair Hill Foundation, and Maryland Horse Industry Board urge the consideration of this change.

If you have additional questions, please contact Cassie Shirk, Director of Legislation and Governmental Affairs, at [cassie.shirk@maryland.gov](mailto:cassie.shirk@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5886.