

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 220 (Delegate James)  
Environmental Matters

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**Program Open Space - Local Agricultural Exposition Centers - Authorization**

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This bill authorizes each local jurisdiction to construct and operate one agricultural exposition center on local Program Open Space (POS) land and sell specified products, produced within that local jurisdiction, at the center. An “agricultural exposition center” is a building or other place for holding exhibitions for the display and sale of agricultural produce, livestock, and other agriculture-related products and includes a facility for agriculture-related entertainment, an agricultural services organization, a farmer’s market, and a livestock auction.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not directly affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** The bill does not directly affect local finances; however, to the extent the bill facilitates local jurisdictions’ efforts to establish agricultural exposition centers, they benefit.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** POS funds are to be used by the State to acquire land for outdoor public recreation and open space use and by local governments for the acquisition and development of land for recreation and open space.

**Background:** POS, established in 1969 and administered by the Department of Natural Resources, provides funds for State and local conservation acquisitions and development

of public outdoor recreational sites, facilities, and open space. The State share of POS focuses on the acquisition of land for natural resource conservation with the inclusion of low-impact recreational activities where appropriate. The local jurisdictions' share of POS is used primarily for the acquisition and development of high-impact recreational sites and facilities. As of January 6, 2010, the State share had preserved 302,538 acres and the local share had preserved 44,205 acres. While bond funds were provided most recently, POS is principally funded through special funds derived from the State's transfer tax which imposes a 0.5% tax on all real property recorded in the State.

There is interest in developing an agricultural exposition center in Harford County; however, the land available for a center may have been purchased with local POS funding.

**Small Business Effect:** To the extent the bill facilitates the establishment of agricultural exposition centers that help small agricultural businesses market and sell their goods more successfully, the bill has a meaningful effect.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 233 (Senator Glassman, *et al.*) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 4, 2010  
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