

**SB0610/903729/1**

BY: Senator Young

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 610  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, strike line 2 in its entirety and substitute “Task Force on the Forest Conservation Act Offset Policy”; and strike beginning with “altering” in line 3 down through “Act” in line 22 and substitute “establishing the Task Force on the Forest Conservation Act Offset Policy; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to review, study, and develop findings and recommendations regarding forest conservation in Maryland; authorizing the Task Force to consult with certain entities in carrying out its duties; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force on the Forest Conservation Act Offset Policy”.

On pages 1 and 2, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 23 on page 1 through line 16 on page 2, inclusive.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 18, strike “the Laws of Maryland read as follows”; and after line 18, insert:

“(a) There is a Task Force on the Forest Conservation Act Offset Policy.

(b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

(1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(Over)

(2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee;

(4) two municipal government representatives, designated by the Maryland Municipal League;

(5) two county government representatives, designated by the Maryland Association of Counties; and

(6) the following 14 representatives, appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House:

(i) four representatives from conservation organizations;

(ii) one representative from a land preservation organization;

(iii) one representative from a wildlife conservation organization;

(iv) one representative from the Sustainable Forestry Council;

(v) one representative from the nursery industry in the State;

(vi) one representative from the public health sector;

(vii) two representatives from the utility industry;

(viii) two representatives from the commercial and residential development industry; and

(ix) one faculty member from a State college or university urban forestry or planning program.

(c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall designate jointly the chair or cochairs of the Task Force.

(d) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force shall:

(1) review and study the following issues:

(i) the amount and nature of historical and projected future changes in forested land due to development under the Forest Conservation Act, including changes due to activities exempt from the Act;

(ii) the amount and nature of forest clearing based on the type and location of development, such as differentiating low-density development from development that is associated with proximity to core public infrastructure and population centers;

(iii) the capacity of Priority Funding Areas to accommodate reforestation efforts, and alternatives for offsetting losses;

(iv) the status and effectiveness of fee-in-lieu programs in offsetting forest loss, considering the actual costs to local jurisdictions to undertake tree plantings; and

(v) mechanisms for ensuring timely reporting and maintenance of public records required annually under the Forest Conservation Act; and

(2) develop findings and recommendations for legislation to implement the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to Study a No Net Loss of Forest Policy's Final Report of 2009 and the Sustainable Forestry Council's Report on Policies to Achieve a No Net Loss of Forests in Maryland of 2011 related to the Forest Conservation Act, which may include:

(i) altering Forest Conservation Act mitigation ratios and allowable exemptions to fully offset all forest loss;

(ii) encouraging forest mitigation banking and other options to more efficiently replace forest lost to development;

(iii) enhancing protection for contiguous forest patches greater than 200 acres; and

(iv) adjusting fee-in-lieu programs as necessary to ensure all forest loss is offset or otherwise benefiting Maryland's forest goals.

(g) The Task Force may consult with the Chesapeake Bay Program, the U.S. Forest Service, and other government agencies or academic institutions to obtain information about data, models, and policies useful in carrying out the duties of the Task Force.

(h) On or before December 1, 2018, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

On pages 2 through 10, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 19 on page 2 through line 13 on page 10, inclusive.

On page 10, in line 14, strike “3.” and substitute “2.”; in line 15, strike “October” and substitute “June”; and in the same line, after the period insert “It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June 30, 2019, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.”.