



February 7, 2023

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: *House Bill 204 – Maryland Aviation Commission - Duties, Composition, and Member Orientation*
Position: *Support with Amendments*

Dear Chair Barnes and Appropriations Committee Members:

The BWI Business Partnership (The Partnership) writes to share our position on **House Bill 204– Maryland Aviation Commission - Duties, Composition, and Member Orientation**. The BWI Business Partnership is a nonprofit corporation comprised of governmental organizations, private businesses, and academic institutions, advocating for strong transportation policy and initiatives, driving sustainable economic and workforce development, and facilitating meaningful strategic relationships germane to the growth and development of the BWI Region.

House Bill 204 has several major provisions:

- Alters the duties and composition of the Maryland Aviation Commission (the Commission) which is the statutory body charged with creating policy, regulations, and airport policy for Maryland’s state-owned airports.
- Requires that four of the governor’s eight gubernatorial appointees to the commission (the ninth member is the Secretary of Transportation, who serves as chair) to be selected from a list designated by a workgroup that was formed by the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Aviation Administration (MDOT MAA) in 2017 at the request of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide feedback and recommendations on the implementation of the FAA’s NextGen plans, particularly as it relates to noise disturbances.
- Adds additional requirements to the Commission’s annual report, to include a summary of commission initiatives supporting healthy, livable communities, as well as recommendations of the Commission for future changes in improved mitigation of adverse health and livability impacts on neighboring and impacted communities.

The Partnership supports the intent of the bill to ensure community representation on the Commission. We would, however, propose an amendment to strike the bill’s language regarding the selection of Commission members and instead require that one of the eight appointees be a county resident of Anne Arundel County, and another of the eight appointees be a county resident of Howard County. The respective county executives would make the nomination and forward it to the governor.



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This amendment to the bill's appointment process and the number of specified appointments will eliminate the Partnership's concern that the bill as drafted creates an unbalanced Commission membership, while recognizing the desire for increased community representation.

We would also propose striking the new language in the bill found on page 2 in lines 5 through 9. The existing language outlining the Commission's charge does not single out any specific operating issue, and the Partnership believes that is the appropriate approach. Removing that language does not preclude the Commission from reviewing health implications or any other specific operating issue. Further, The Partnership contends that the healthy, livable community concerns would be addressed through the bill's new language on page 4, line 31 through page 5, line 2, which adds the requirement that the Commission's annual report include a summary of commission initiatives supporting healthy, livable communities, as well as recommendations of the Commission for future changes in improved mitigation of adverse health and livability impacts on neighboring and impacted communities.

BWI Marshall is a vital component of the State's economy. Based on economic data from Calendar Year (CY) 2017, BWI Marshall Airport supports 106,488 total jobs in the regional economy. Further, the airport produces \$4.1 billion in personal wages and is responsible for \$9.3 billion in business revenue for the state. The overall activity at BWI Marshall Airport produces an estimated \$579 million in tax revenue for state and local governments.

As introduced, House Bill 204 has the potential to divert the Commission's focus from its responsibility to improve and promote BWI Marshall Airport in the metropolitan region and threatens future improvements. The Partnership respectfully requests the committee amend House Bill 204 as proposed.

Sincerely,

Gina Stewart
The BWI Business Partnership
Executive Director