



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 20, 2024

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: HB 420 – State and Local Parks - Play Area Accessibility – Recreation
Communication Boards Pilot Program

Position: Favorable as Amended

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports the amended version of House Bill 420, which establishes a Maryland Recreation Communication Boards Pilot Program, administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

As originally drafted, this bill pulled revenues from Program Open Space (POS) to fund the purchase and installation of “communication boards” in play areas and State and local parks. Local governments rely heavily on POS for recreation and open space development, but the fund is limited. Many applicants are denied or do not receive the full funding they requested. Allocating POS revenues to fund communication boards would divert funding opportunities for other valuable and viable projects. However, amending the bill to create a Pilot Program funded by the Park System Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund supports the intent of the legislation without diluting POS.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests a favorable report on the current draft of House Bill 420.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Kuhns

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Bill Jorch

Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Director, Public Policy & Research

Deputy Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs