



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

WILLIAM J. THORNE
Legislative Associate

BILL NO.: HB 293

TITLE: State Boat Act – Abandoned or Sunken Recreational Vessels – Identification and Removal

SPONSOR: Delegate Arentz

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENT**

DATE: February 14, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** House Bill 293 – State Boat Act – Abandoned or Sunken Recreational Vessels – Identification and Removal. This legislation would allow the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to remove an abandoned or sunken vessel.

Enabling the removal of abandoned or sunken vessels is a legislative priority for the Baltimore County. The Baltimore County Police Department Marine Unit has documented a persistent issue with individuals leaving abandoned vessels in the waterways of Baltimore County. Current law does not require ownership transfers of vessels to be reported to the state, therefore it is very difficult to determine the owner of an abandoned boat. The law also requires the owner be notified prior to the vessel being removed from the water, even when the vessel is clearly abandoned. HB 293 would aide in streamlining the process of considering a vessel abandoned. HB 293 however does place the burden of vessel removal independently on the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Baltimore County requests an amendment to the bill allowing DNR to designate another entity to handle the removal of abandoned vessels in each jurisdiction.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 293 from the House Environment and Transportation committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.