

February 14, 2024

Maryland General Assembly
Environment and Transportation Committee
Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Written Testimony in opposition of: House Bill No. 457:

Submitted by:
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Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
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Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

My name is Melanie Taylor and on behalf of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 457. While we greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet with the bill's sponsor to provide our perspective, we continue to have strong concerns about the bill's proposed language.

As a 501(c)6 trade association representing the synthetic turf industry, the STC office is headquartered in Harford County, Forest Hill, Maryland. Founded in 2002, the STC represents over 200 members and promotes industry excellence through voluntary guidelines, certifications, and other learning platforms. Our membership includes representatives from every stage of installing and maintaining a turf field, including builders, design professionals, civil engineers, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill and shock pad suppliers and specialty service companies.

The STC has two primary issues with House Bill 457:

1. **Definition of "custodian"** – As written, a custodian includes "a person that owns or is in control of synthetic turf in the state" or "any current or subsequent owner of a property on which there is existing synthetic turf". We recommend a clearer definition of custodian as the owner of the turf system to help narrow the responsible parties so that when a new field is installed, only one party reports it one time.
2. **Threshold of 5,000 square feet minimum** – We believe sports fields average at 75,000 square feet and playfields 30,000 to 50,000 square feet. Anything below that would include landscape and commercial applications that have life spans up to 15 and 20 years.

The STC is committed to protecting the environment and currently provides the latest guidance and resources on the best ways to reuse and/or recycle each component of a synthetic turf field. We are happy to provide counsel on such bills that would further codify established industry guidelines that effectively encourage sustainability and proper end-of-life handling.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melanie Taylor, CAE
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
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