



MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

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One Common Bond: The Horse
One Common Voice: The Horse Council

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Maryland Horse Council, I am writing to express our strong support for HB 225, legislation extending the statutory authority of the Maryland Horse Industry Board through July 1, 2036, in accordance with the Maryland Program Evaluation Act.

HB 225 is a prudent and necessary measure that ensures continuity of an existing and effective Board. The bill does not establish new programs, expand powers, or require new appropriations, and it carries no additional fiscal impact to the State.

Passage of HB 225 preserves the Maryland Horse Industry Board's authority to administer and steward dedicated horse industry funds, including competitive grant programs that reinvest directly into Maryland's horse industry. These funds play a vital role in supporting industry growth, education, and sustainability.

As you may know, the Maryland Horse Industry Board provides an established and accountable structure for coordinating education initiatives, workforce development, animal health and welfare efforts, and equine-related economic activity across the State. The Board also serves as the licensing body for Maryland Licensed Stable stables, an essential function that supports industry standards, consumer confidence, and public safety.

Allowing the Board to sunset would eliminate an effective mechanism for managing existing resources, create unnecessary operational disruption, and risk inefficiencies or increased costs should these functions need to be reestablished in the future.

HB 225 supports stability and long-term planning for Maryland's \$2.9 billion horse industry, which sustains thousands of jobs, preserves open space, and contributes significantly to the State's agricultural and tourism economies. Extending the Board reflects sound governance by maintaining oversight, transparency, and continuity while remaining subject to future evaluation under State law.



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For these reasons, the Maryland Horse Council respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 225.

Sincerely,

Laura J. Lane-Unsworth

President

Maryland Horse Council