



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 24, 2026

BILL NUMBER: HOUSE BILL 640 - FIRST READER

SHORT TITLE: MANDATED REPORTS, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS - REVISIONS

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: LETTER OF SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT'S POSITION

The Department supports efforts to streamline and modernize statutes in order to improve the Department's efficiency and effectiveness. This omnibus legislation includes provisions that would:

1. Update the membership of the Hart-Miller-Pleasure Island Citizens Oversight Committee to ensure adequate citizen input on the future of the Island;
2. Eliminate an unnecessary requirement for the compilation and publication of a list of Park maintenance projects over a certain dollar amount; and
3. Eliminate a reporting requirement related to the invasive Nutria (*Myocastor coypu*), which was successfully extirpated from the State in 2015.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Hart-Miller-Pleasure Island Citizens Oversight Committee was created in the early 1980s to provide input from stakeholders to State agencies regarding the management of dredged material placement at Hart-Miller Island. The Committee continues to advise the State government on future disposition of the island and on transition plans for the return of the island's day-to-day management from the Maryland Port Administration to the Department of Natural Resources.

Provisions regarding the Park maintenance project report were added to statute by the Great Maryland Outdoors Act in order to ensure the Department was comprehensively tracking maintenance needs. Internal reforms in the Department since its passage have rendered such a report obsolete.

Nutria is a species of rodent that was introduced to Maryland in the early 20th century and which became an invasive pest, damaging wetland ecosystems across the State. DNR coordinated efforts to eradicate the pest, and the species was successfully extirpated from the State more than a decade ago.

BILL EXPLANATION

This ominous legislation eliminates a number of antiquated provisions of State law.

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