

SENATE BILL 735

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2002 Regular Session  
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By: **Senator Middleton (Chairman, Task Force on Resource Based Industry  
in Maryland) and Senator Stoltzfus**

Introduced and read first time: February 1, 2002  
Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Committee Report: Favorable  
Senate action: Adopted  
Read second time: February 28, 2002

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on Resource Industry Business Development**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on Resource Industry Business  
4 Development; providing for a certain membership of the Task Force; requiring  
5 the Task Force to establish a certain workgroup, perform certain functions, and  
6 report to certain persons by a certain date; authorizing the Task Force to  
7 appoint certain committees; providing a certain staff for the Task Force;  
8 prohibiting certain persons from the receipt of certain compensation, and  
9 authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; providing for the  
10 termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force on Resource  
11 Industry Business Development.

12 Preamble

13 WHEREAS, Chapter 433 of the Acts of 2000 enacted the Task Force on Resource  
14 Based Industry in Maryland in order to examine the need for, and feasibility of,  
15 establishing a finance development authority to assist the State's farming, fishing,  
16 forestry, and mining extraction industries with loans, financing, training, and  
17 technical and business planning assistance services; and

18 WHEREAS, In its preliminary findings and recommendations issued in January  
19 2001, the Task Force recommended that a comprehensive interagency needs  
20 assessment be conducted in order to enhance understanding of the loans and grants  
21 that would be necessary to address the initial needs of resource based industries; and

1 WHEREAS, Chapter 196 of the Acts of 2001 extended the Task Force for an  
2 additional year in order to continue its work in the study and development of these  
3 rural-based business operations; and

4 WHEREAS, An interagency workgroup of Task Force members met on a regular  
5 basis in order to focus the work of the group and to coordinate the completion of the  
6 needs assessment; and

7 WHEREAS, In light of the completed needs assessment, it is the understanding  
8 of the Task Force that in today's rural economy there is no great demand for  
9 additional lending mechanisms in order to support start-up needs of resource based  
10 industries, and thus the establishment of a finance development authority is not  
11 recommended at this time; and

12 WHEREAS, Although the original charge of the Task Force on Resource Based  
13 Industry in Maryland has been accomplished and that task force sunsets as of  
14 January 31, 2002, there is still a great need for government attention to several areas  
15 that are integral to the continued operation and success of rural industries; and

16 WHEREAS, In order to maintain resource based industries as the backbone of  
17 the rural economy, State effort should now turn to other development concerns such  
18 as public education on the Statewide benefits of rural-based industry, better  
19 communication between business operators and State agencies, innovation in  
20 production techniques and technology transfer, and entrepreneurial training in  
21 management and marketing skills; and

22 WHEREAS, Given the education and perspective that task force members have  
23 acquired over the term of the Task Force on Resource Based Industry in Maryland, it  
24 is their unanimous recommendation that a new task force be fashioned in order to  
25 carry forward the State's support and enhancement of economic growth opportunities  
26 for rural industry; and

27 WHEREAS, It is therefore necessary and appropriate to reconfigure the first  
28 task force appointed in this area, to expand the areas of expertise represented in the  
29 membership, to change the name of the task force and to redefine its charge, and to  
30 create the Task Force on Resource Industry Business Development; now, therefore,

31 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
32 MARYLAND, That:

33 (a) There is a Task Force on Resource Industry Business Development.

34 (b) The Task Force consists of the following 28 members:

35 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President  
36 of the Senate;

37 (2) two members of the Maryland House of Delegates, appointed by the  
38 Speaker of the House;

- 1                   (3)   (i)     the Secretary of Business and Economic Development, or the  
2 Secretary's designee; and
- 3                               (ii)    three economic development officials from rural counties,  
4 selected by the Secretary of Business and Economic Development as follows:
- 5                               1.     one from the Eastern Shore of Maryland;
- 6                               2.     one from the Western Shore of Maryland; and
- 7                               3.     one from Southern Maryland;
- 8                   (4)    the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary's designee;
- 9                   (5)    two representatives of the Department of Natural Resources,  
10 appointed by the Secretary of Natural Resources:
- 11                           (i)     one from the Forest Service; and
- 12                           (ii)    one from the Fisheries Service;
- 13                   (6)    the Executive Director of the Maryland Food Center Authority, or the  
14 Executive Director's designee;
- 15                   (7)    the Director of the Maryland Cooperative Extension, or the Director's  
16 designee;
- 17                   (8)    (i)     the Executive Director of the Forvm for Rural Maryland, or the  
18 Executive Director's designee; and
- 19                               (ii)    an economic development representative who specializes in  
20 agricultural economic development, appointed by the Executive Director of the Forvm  
21 for Rural Maryland;
- 22                   (9)    the Chair of the Maryland Forestry Task Force, or the Chair's  
23 designee;
- 24                   (10)   a representative of the Western Maryland "One Maryland" Task  
25 Force, selected by the members of the Western Maryland Task Force;
- 26                   (11)   a representative of the Eastern Shore "One Maryland" Task Force,  
27 selected by the members of the Eastern Shore Task Force;
- 28                   (12)   a representative of the Maryland Farm Bureau;
- 29                   (13)   a representative of the Maryland Forests Association;
- 30                   (14)   a representative of the Maryland Saltwater Sportsfishermen's  
31 Association;
- 32                   (15)   a representative of the Maryland Aggregates Association;

1 (16) a representative of the Maryland Watermen's Association;

2 (17) a representative of the Maryland Nursery and Landscape  
3 Association; and

4 (18) one representative from each of the following regional councils,  
5 appointed by the respective council's executive director:

6 (i) Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland;

7 (ii) Tri-County Council for Western Maryland;

8 (iii) Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore; and

9 (iv) Mid-Shore Regional Council.

10 (c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall jointly  
11 designate two of the members as cochairs of the Task Force.

12 (d) The Task Force shall:

13 (1) establish an interagency workgroup and its specific charge within the  
14 operation of the Task Force;

15 (2) study the current and anticipated needs for grants and loans for  
16 specific elements of rural business development, such as niche market development,  
17 technology transfer, research and development, and micro-enterprise development  
18 for resource based industries;

19 (3) consider the factors involved in, and investigate the feasibility of, the:

20 (i) creation of a staff position to act as an information  
21 clearinghouse for resource based industries;

22 (ii) creation or enhancement of a pool of grant funds for resource  
23 based innovation and research; and

24 (iii) sponsorship of education and networking seminars to enhance  
25 the quality and quantity of economic development opportunities available to rural  
26 businesses;

27 (4) develop specific recommendations for improving economic  
28 development of resource based industries and related innovation, information  
29 sharing, technology transfer, coordination, and business education and training;

30 (5) monitor:

31 (i) the performance and progress of State agencies in their service  
32 of resource based industries; and

1 (ii) relevant studies of rural-based business, including those  
2 conducted by the University of Maryland and Salisbury University; and

3 (6) report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in  
4 accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly  
5 on or before September 30, 2003.

6 (e) As necessary and appropriate, the Task Force may appoint ad hoc  
7 committees to assist the Task Force in any aspect of the development of resource  
8 industry business opportunities and markets.

9 (f) The Department of Legislative Services, with the assistance of the Forvm  
10 for Rural Maryland, shall provide staff for the Task Force.

11 (g) A member of the Task Force or of an ad hoc committee of the Task Force  
12 may not receive compensation for serving on the Task Force or committee, but is  
13 entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations,  
14 as provided in the State budget.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
16 June 1, 2002. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 5 months and, at the  
17 end of October 31, 2003, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this  
18 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.