

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Joint Resolution 4 (Senator Brinkley, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Sustainable Forestry

This joint resolution urges the Governor to direct the Secretary of Natural Resources to take all legal and necessary steps to encourage private forestland owners to be responsible stewards of their land by providing them with incentives and relief from unnecessary regulations to offset the pressure to sell their land for development. The joint resolution also states that the General Assembly acknowledges the forest industry as a viable economic contributor to the State and recognizes and acknowledges the commitment, work, and services provided by private forestland owners, the State agencies that oversee public forests, and the forest products industry.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Compliance with this joint resolution is not anticipated to significantly affect State operations or finances. Because the resolution does not outline specific actions to be taken, however, it is difficult to fully gauge the potential impact at this time.

Local Effect: Compliance with this joint resolution is not anticipated to directly affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Background: More than 2.5 million acres, or 41%, of Maryland's landscape are forested. Approximately 130,600 private landowners own and manage 76% (1.95 million acres) of the State's forests. Approximately 610,000 acres, or 24%, are owned by

federal, State, and other public owners. Although the forest industry owns very little land in the State, according to the Department of Natural Resources, a recent study estimated that the industry contributes approximately \$2 billion in economic activity to the State each year. This includes all aspects of the industry, including growth and management of forests, harvesting, primary processing of trees into lumber and pulp, and secondary processing of lumber into furniture and other wood products.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HJ 11 (Delegate Edwards, *et al.*) – Rules and Executive Nominations.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2003
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