

# SENATE BILL 688

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By: **Senator Middleton**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2016

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Develop a Strategic Plan for State Park Development**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Develop a Strategic Plan for State Park  
4 Development; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force;  
5 prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but  
6 authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to  
7 develop certain principles and policies and investigate certain matters related to  
8 State parks; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to  
9 the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the  
10 termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Develop a  
11 Strategic Plan for State Park Development.

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

13 That:

14 (a) There is a Task Force to Develop a Strategic Plan for State Park Development.

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

16 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, one representing each of the  
17 principal political parties, appointed by the President of the Senate;

18 (2) two members of the House of Delegates, one representing each of the  
19 principal political parties, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

20 (3) the Director of the National Parks Service, or the Director's designee;

21 (4) the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee;

22 (5) the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's designee; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (6) the following five members, appointed by the Governor:
- 2 (i) a representative of Friends of Maryland State Forests and Parks,  
3 Inc.;
- 4 (ii) a retired park ranger with law enforcement experience;
- 5 (iii) a representative of Partners for Open Space;
- 6 (iv) a representative of an outdoor recreation business; and
- 7 (v) a representative of a county tourism office.
- 8 (c) To the extent practicable, the membership of the Task Force shall reflect the  
9 gender, racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the State.
- 10 (d) The Governor shall designate from the members that are members of the  
11 General Assembly the cochairs of the Task Force.
- 12 (e) The Department of Natural Resources shall provide staff for the Task Force.
- 13 (f) A member of the Task Force:
- 14 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but
- 15 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
16 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.
- 17 (g) The Task Force shall:
- 18 (1) develop strategic principles and a policy framework for mid- to  
19 long-term decisions regarding the allocation of operating and capital funding provided to  
20 the State parks;
- 21 (2) develop a quality control mechanism for assuring and verifying  
22 adherence to the strategic principles and policy framework developed under paragraph (1)  
23 of this subsection;
- 24 (3) establish workgroups to investigate:
- 25 (i) capital projects and critical maintenance needs at State parks;
- 26 (ii) cultural and historical preservation at State parks;
- 27 (iii) public safety at State parks;

1 (iv) revenue generation at State parks and the establishment of  
2 public-private partnerships; and

3 (v) the role of park rangers at State parks; and

4 (4) make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly  
5 regarding a comprehensive vision and strategic plan to restore State parks to their former  
6 top tier status.

7 (h) On or before December 31, 2017, the Task Force shall report its findings and  
8 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State  
9 Government Article, the General Assembly.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
11 October 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of September  
12 30, 2018, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be  
13 abrogated and of no further force and effect.