

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 489  
Ways and Means

(Delegate McDonough, *et al.*)

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Study Group on Building a Supertrack and Performance Center in Baltimore  
County

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This bill establishes a Study Group on Building a Supertrack and Performance Center in Baltimore County, chaired by the Baltimore County Executive. The bill specifies the members of the study group. The study group must examine the feasibility of building a race track and multipurpose center in Baltimore County with private funds to replace Pimlico Race Course, to conduct the Preakness Stakes and other horse races, and to serve as a venue for other sporting and entertainment events. The study group must report its findings and recommendations by November 30, 2018, as specified in the bill. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2018, and terminates June 30, 2019.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** The Baltimore County Executive can chair the study group with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** The Preakness Stakes is an American flat thoroughbred horse race held on the third Saturday in May each year at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore City. It is the second race of the Triple Crown of horse racing, which also includes the Kentucky Derby and the Belmont Stakes. First run in 1873, the Preakness Stakes was

named by a former Maryland Governor after a colt that won the Dinner Party Stakes at Pimlico in its opening year.

The Preakness Stakes may be transferred to another track in the State only as the result of a disaster or emergency. If the Preakness Stakes is transferred out of the State, the Maryland Racing Commission may revoke any racing days awarded to the Maryland Jockey Club of Baltimore City, Inc., or its successor, and award those racing days to another licensee.

If the Preakness Stakes is offered for sale, the State has the option to buy the Preakness Stakes for the amount of any offer the licensee wishes to accept. The racetrack licensee must notify the State of the offer within 30 days of receiving the offer. The State must notify the licensee within 60 days if it wishes to exercise the option to purchase the Preakness Stakes.

The Maryland Stadium Authority approved a request from the Maryland Racing Commission to manage a study that will evaluate Pimlico Race Course's ability to serve as the permanent home for the Preakness Stakes. The study will be performed in up to two phases. The [first phase](#), which was released in February 2017, evaluated the existing condition of the Pimlico Race Course from a physical, user, and economic perspective. The study estimated renovating the track could cost between \$250 million and \$300 million.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore County; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Maryland Stadium Authority; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 12, 2018  
nb/jrb

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