

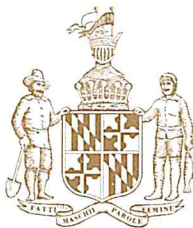
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Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

—
MINORITY WHIP
—

Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee



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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 23, 2020

Chairman Paul G. Pinsky
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Bill 28 Solid Waste Management – Prohibition on Releasing a Balloon Into the
Atmosphere

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 28, prohibiting the release of balloons into the atmosphere, is necessary to prevent harm to the environment, agricultural industry, wildlife and marine animals of our state.

This is truly a bipartisan issue that we are working together to address. In fact, the idea originated in Queen Anne's County with five Republican County Commissioners as a result of the impact balloon releases were having on the Eastern Shore and Chesapeake Bay.

In August of 2019 the Queen Anne's County Commissioners passed a County Ordinance in response to the issue. One of the most prevalent items of trash found during the Kent Island Beach cleanup events are deflated balloons and string. Queen Anne's County farmers have found balloons from the Midwest in their fields. Even the horses at Assateague Island have been found to eat discarded balloons, causing health problems.

The intent of this bill is to bring more awareness to what the balloons can do to the Chesapeake Bay and its surrounding wildlife. This bill does not pertain to hot air balloon releases. I ask the committee's favorable consideration of Senate Bill 519.