

**SB 634 Senator Carozza Written Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carozza, Senator Mary Beth

Position: FAV

MARY BETH CAROZZA  
Legislative District 38  
Somerset, Wicomico,  
and Worcester Counties

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
Committee



Annapolis Office  
James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 314  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3645 • 301-858-3645  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3645  
Fax 410-841-3006 • 301-858-3006  
MaryBeth.Carozza@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 10, 2021

**The Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Senate Bill 634 Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting  
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza**

Thank you Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the opportunity to respectfully ask for your support of **Senate Bill 634 Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting**. This would authorize the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to allow an individual in Somerset County to hunt on private property on each Sunday of game bird and game mammal season. It would also allow Sunday hunting on public land to Somerset County leased to a hunt club.

This legislation would add Somerset County to the current list of Counties that are permitted to hunt on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons including Allegany County, Cecil County, Garrett County, St. Mary's County, Washington County as mentioned in **Article - Natural Resources** §10-410(a)(1). It also would allow Somerset County (leased to a hunt club) to hunt on public land along with Allegany County, Cecil County, Garrett County, St. Mary's County, Washington County, Dorchester County, and Frederick County as mentioned in §10-410(a)(15).

Senate Bill 634 is a local request from our active hunters as they believe this legislation would allow more time for Somerset County families to hunt during a limited season for game bird and game mammals. This would provide Somerset County hunters with the same benefits of several other counties that allow Sunday hunting and hunting on public land.

My panel will explain more of the family hunting and safety traditions in Somerset County, and the local benefits of this legislation. The panel includes Charles Laird, Somerset County Commission Vice President and Ashley Webster an active hunter in Somerset County. I respectfully ask my colleagues on the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for a favorable report on Senate Bill 634.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this local bill.

# **Support of SB 634 - Somerset County - Natural Reso**

Uploaded by: Ferguson, Colby

Position: FAV



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

March 10, 2021

To: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

## **Re: Support of SB 634 - Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting**

On behalf of our member families in Somerset County, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 634, legislation that expands Sunday hunting in Somerset County by authorizing the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to allow a person in Somerset County to hunt any game bird or mammal on a Sunday during the open season for that game bird or mammal (including on public land leased to a hunt club that is designated for hunting by DNR).

Crop damage created by deer is nearly \$50 per acre today. These numbers are even higher on the Eastern Shore. DNR reports show that more than 10% of the deer harvested this hunting season were done on Sundays. Opening Somerset County to have these additional Sunday hunting dates will allow the hunters to help address the overpopulation of deer in Somerset County.

**MDFB Policy:** We support statewide Sunday hunting on private lands.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 634 AND ENCOURAGES A FAVORABLE REPORT.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

*For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396*

**SB0634\_DNR\_SUP 3-10-21 EHEA.pdf**

Uploaded by: McKittrick, James

Position: FAV



Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein  
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 634 – Somerset County – Sunday Hunting***

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources offers its support for Senate Bill 634. This bill would allow Sunday hunting for deer, other game mammals, and game bird species in Somerset County throughout their respective seasons. Currently, Somerset County is authorized for Sunday deer hunting during the firearm season, four Sundays during the deer archery season and the one day of the deer season for junior hunters only.

In general, the department strongly supports the self-determination of local jurisdictions to expand hunting opportunities within the State. Hunting remains the most cost-effective method for controlling the deer population throughout Maryland. The department advises that Sunday hunting has contributed positively to managing the State's white-tailed deer population in the 20 counties where it is now permitted. Sunday hunting can be especially important if the weather causes unfavorable hunting conditions on the Saturday of the same weekend. Likewise, many hunters only have time to hunt on weekends, so allowing Sunday hunting essentially doubles their opportunity to pursue deer. Hunters have harvested over 75,000 deer on Sundays since becoming a legal hunting day in 2003.

There are a number of public lands in Somerset County, most of those existing tracts are remote undeveloped state forests and wildlife management areas. The one exception is Janes Island State Park. This Park would not be open to Sunday hunting as existing law prohibits opening lands managed by the Maryland Park Service.

For the above reasons, the department respectfully requests the committee to grant SB 634 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick  
Director, Legislative and Constituent Service

Contact: James McKitrick, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services  
JamesW.McKitrick@maryland.gov ♦ 443-510-5013

# **MD - SB 634 - Sunday Hunting Somerset County - Sup**

Uploaded by: Santos, Trevor

Position: FAV



**TREVOR W. SANTOS**

Director, Government Relations - State Affairs

tsantos@nssf.org | 202-220-1340 x205 | nssf.org

March 8, 2021

**SENATE BILL 634  
SUPPORT**

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky  
Chair, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 634 – Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting**

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”), I submit these comments in support for Senate Bill 634 (“SB 634”) by Senator Carozza. SB 634 would authorize the Department of Natural Resources to allow a person in Somerset County to hunt on private property on each Sunday of the game bird or game mammal seasons; and establishing an exception to the prohibition against the Department authorizing Sunday hunting on public land for public land in Somerset County leased to a hunt club.

As the trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, NSSF seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. We have a membership of thousands of manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, and shooting ranges. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Maryland sportsmen and women, the U.S. military, and law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

This important piece of legislation will expand current Sunday hunting opportunities for sportsmen, women, and children in Somerset County. Sunday hunting is an excellent vehicle to recruit new hunter-conservationists. Hunting, fishing, and other forms of outdoor recreation have proven physical, psychological, and educational benefits for our nation’s young people. Due to the greater prevalence of academic, athletic, and other competing activities that take place on Saturday, it is likely that allowing Sunday hunting will more than double the number of days children can hunt.

The passage of Senate Bill 634 will help ensure Maryland’s strong hunting heritage can be enjoyed and passed on to future generations of hunters and conservationists, and it is for these reasons that the National Shooting Sports Foundation supports the passage of Senator Carozza’s Senate Bill 634.

Sincerely,

Trevor W. Santos



**testimony - Sunday hunting - yearround - Somerset-**

Uploaded by: Seigler, Jane

Position: UNF



Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on SB 634 - Somerset County -  
Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting: **OPPOSE**

- ❖ **A majority of Marylanders oppose Sunday hunting.** An independent statewide poll conducted by Gonzales Research and Media Services in 2018 found that 68.9% of respondents oppose Sunday hunting, and 78% would decide to alter their recreational plans to avoid hunters. In a Maryland Horse Council 2016 poll, 85% of respondents said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters. Even DNR's own commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ **This bill would allow hunting in Somerset County on every Sunday of the year.**
- ❖ **This bill would allow Sunday hunting on public that is leased to a hunt club as well as private land. Since the advent of the pandemic, widespread use of outdoor recreation and natural resources by the general public has only increased.** For example, attendance at Maryland State Parks in 2020 increased 45% over 2019, which was also a record year.<sup>2</sup> **Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons. Now is not the time to increase general public exposure to possible hunting risks.**
- ❖ **The Maryland horse industry represents \$2.1 billion in economic impact;** 28,000 jobs; \$1 billion in annual spending by participants; \$78 million in tax revenue. Over \$73 million in infrastructure improvements to public and private facilities around the state. There are over 100,000 horses in Maryland (more per square mile than any state in the Union), and 51.8% of Maryland households contain horse enthusiasts.<sup>3</sup> There are horses in every county in the state.<sup>4</sup> The majority of Maryland riders are trail riders.<sup>5</sup>

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based, umbrella trade association of the entire horse industry in Maryland. Our membership includes over 40 breed, interest and discipline associations, plus horse farms and stables, horse-related businesses, and horse owners representing all facets of the Maryland equestrian community, from the owners of race horses and race tracks, to the owners of international level competition horses, local sport horses, trail horses or just beloved retired companion horses. The owner of Pimlico, Laurel and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018\\_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2021/02/04/lt-governor-boyd-k-rutherford-maryland-department-of-natural-resources-announce-45-percent-increase-in-maryland-state-parks-attendance-in-2020/>

<sup>3</sup> See attached fact sheet.

<sup>4</sup> According to the 2010 Maryland Equine Census (current numbers are likely about 25% higher, based on current total statewide population): Allegany 350; Baltimore 8950; Carroll 6050; Frederick 7850; Garrett 1500; Harford 6200; Howard 4350; Montgomery 7900; Washington 3750; Anne Arundel 4500; Calvert 1350; Charles 1750; Prince George's 7100; Saint Mary's 2300; Caroline 1300; Cecil 6200; Kent 1200; Queen Anne's 1700; Talbot 1500; Dorchester 350; Somerset 270; Wicomico 1800; Worcester 880

<sup>5</sup> <http://equiery.com/trail-riding-tops-reader-survey/>

Rosecroft racetracks is a member, as are vets, tack stores, and other farms, businesses and enthusiasts throughout the state. As such, we stand for over 30,000 Marylanders. Every Maryland county, without exception, is home to hundreds to thousands of horses. (See footnote 3) There are more horse per square mile in Maryland than in any state in the Union. (See attached fact sheet.)

The horse industry in Maryland is a large, engaged and thriving constituency, and a strong economic engine: 28,000 direct equine related jobs; 16,000 properties occupying over 705,000 acres (almost 10% of Maryland's total land area, and over 25% of Maryland's agricultural land) The industry represents \$2.1 billion in annual economic impact, generating \$78 million in annual tax revenue. Horse industry participants spend \$1 billion dollars annually. There are currently \$73 million dollars in infrastructure investments planned or in the pipeline for public and private equestrian facilities throughout the state. Thus, legislative actions that affect the equine industry have a broad economic effect.

## POSITION

The Horse Council opposes SB 634.

## BACKGROUND

For over 20 years, the Maryland Horse Council has worked to ensure fair use of shared natural resources during hunting season, by seeking to preserve Sundays as the one day of the week when children and adults who are hikers, birdwatchers, dog walkers, trail riders and other outdoor enthusiasts could enjoy the outdoors without concern for adverse interactions with hunters. Almost 20 years ago, we helped defeat a number of statewide Sunday hunting bills. Proponents of Sunday hunting then changed tactics, seeking to introduce Sunday hunting on a county-by-county basis, which we also opposed vigorously. Sometimes they were successful; sometimes not. When they were successful, they succeeded in making an already complicated situation more complicated, making it more difficult for others to plan their outings, and for Natural Resources Police to effectively crack down on poachers and irresponsible hunters, which has caused even more negative encounters between irresponsible hunters and other users.<sup>6</sup>

The Maryland Horse Council has proposed reasonable compromises that would still allow fair use of shared natural resources, by cutting off Sunday hunting, where allowed, at 10:30 am. This compromise still gives both hunters and trail riders and others plenty of Sunday access to opportunities. This compromise has been embraced by some legislators, who have praised the Horse Council for this reasonable approach, and it has been adopted by Montgomery, Kent and Wicomico Counties. Now we are facing a bill that **would allow all day Sunday hunting in Somerset County on every Sunday of the year**, because it covers all species of game birds and game mammals. According to the Maryland hunting season calendar, [https://dnr.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Documents/Hunting\\_Seasons\\_Calendar.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Documents/Hunting_Seasons_Calendar.pdf), there is an open season for at least one species on any day of the year. Coyote, groundhog and nutria are literally year-round. This bill does nothing to improve the situation for Natural Resources Police and continues to infringe on the fair rights of other users of our shared natural resources in Maryland.

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<sup>6</sup> In a 2016 Maryland Horse Council survey, 35% of respondents reported "adverse incidents" with hunters while trail riding, ranging from rudeness to deliberate attempts to spook horses, threatening with firearms, and firing of "warning" shots. Significant percentages of DNR's survey respondents also reported problems when encountering hunters.

The issue of recreational Sunday hunting is certainly a fraught one. In a November 2018 independent Gonzales statewide poll, the vast majority of respondents opposed Sunday hunting:

SUNDAY HUNTING Oppose 68.9%; Favor 21.9%

Breakdown:

Strongly Favor 13.5%

Somewhat Favor 8.4%

Somewhat Oppose 15.4%

Strongly Oppose 53.5%

These majorities opposed to Sunday hunting are true in Baltimore Metro, Washington Metro AND Rural areas. Rural Maryland opposed Sunday hunting 60.5% vs 34.1% in favor. Even DNR's own commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded. (See footnote 1.) This bill directly contravenes that clear public opinion by authorizing DNR to allow all day hunting on all 52 Sundays of the year in Somerset. This would be a tectonic shift for **Somerset, which currently has only nine Sundays open (for deer hunting) - and only on private land.**

It is important to make clear that the Horse Council is not opposed to hunting. Many of our members are hunters of deer, other game mammals and game birds. We just want to ensure that everyone has a safe option for enjoyment of the outdoors, especially in this time of COVID. The COVID pandemic has dramatically increased the level of outdoor activity and use of natural resources. DNR recently announced, for example, that 2020 State Park attendance increased by 45% to 21.5 million visitors. ***Lt. Governor Rutherford stated: "With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic changing the way we live, work, and play, more and more Marylanders are finding affordable, socially-distant, and family-friendly recreation opportunities at our parks and public lands,"*** (See footnote 2.) Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, and are unaware that they may encounter hunters in the woods. Now is not the time to roll the dice and increase the chances of potential adverse interactions between hunters and members of the public who are relatively new to the outdoors..

It is also sometimes argued that recreational hunters need Sundays because they have other things to do on Saturdays - a situation that plainly applies to most of Maryland's families who use outdoor resources, be they hunters, birdwatchers, dog walkers, mountain bikers, off-road vehicle enthusiasts and trail riders. So why should one group get special consideration? Where is the balancing of the public good? The number of licensed hunters in Maryland, fewer than 100,000, pales in comparison to the state's overall population of about 6 million. According to DNR's survey, only 8% of the general population has hunted in the last two years, and 84% has never hunted. Compare that with the 24% who reported making frequent or occasional trips specifically to view and experience wildlife in their native habitat for photography or other non-hunting purposes. (See footnote 1.)

In the Horse Council's statewide survey on Sunday hunting, 68% of respondents ride on trails on public or private land one or more days a week. And, perhaps most significantly, 85% said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters.

This bill would authorize Sunday hunting on both public and private land. We of course recognize that private land owners have some right to decide what uses they want to allow on

their land. But such rights have never been absolute, as any review of zoning and land use rules can plainly establish. And, as a practical matter the public/private land distinction affords little relief since public and private tracts are often relatively small, non-contiguous, intertwined and rarely well-marked. In our survey, referenced above, 56% of respondents said they ride on trails that cross both public and private land.

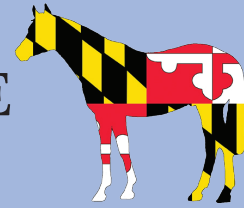
## CONCLUSION

We urge the Committee to give SB 634 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maryland Horse Council  
(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773)



# THE MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY



Thoroughbred & Standardbred horse racing & breeding ♦ trail riding ♦ steeplechase ♦ sport horse competitions ♦ rodeo ♦ carriage driving ♦ therapy programs ♦ recreation ♦ rescue and more

## A Dynamic Agricultural Entity

# 705,000 ACRES



25% of the State's agricultural land

Pastures are among the best filtering devices to protect the Chesapeake Bay from harmful runoff

10% of Maryland land



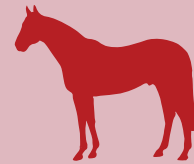
\$80,000,000 on feed, hay and straw

88,000 equine acres preserved forever as farmland



## Number of Horses in Maryland

# 101,457



Horses in Maryland - making MD the number one state in terms of the number of horses per square mile!

10.5 horses per square mile!

## 200

Equine Orgs. Statewide

## 16,000

Horse Farms & Stables

## 35

different equine disciplines

## 40

 breeds

## Integral to the State's Economy



# \$2.1 Billion

Economic Impact



## \$78m

 in tax revenue

## 28,000

 industry jobs

## \$1B

 spent by participants

## A Global Equine Identity



51.8% of households in MD contain horse enthusiasts



10,000 Youths served by MD's Educational Programs

1,500 4H Horse Projects

765 Licensed Riding & Boarding Stables

55 High School Interscholastic Teams

22 Pony Clubs

12 College Equine Teams & Clubs

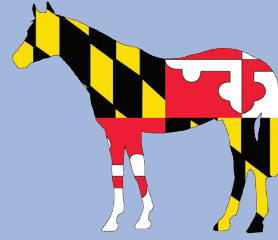


MD is home to International gems:

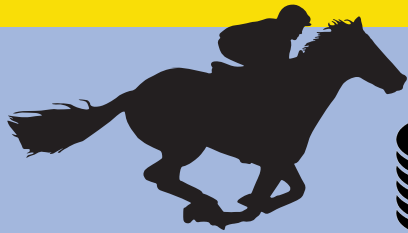
Triple Crown Race - the Preakness since 1875

International 5-Star at Fair Hill in 2020

# THE MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY ECONOMIC IMPACT



## The Racing Sector



Adds **\$365 million** in value to the state economy



Racing Sector Total Economic Impact of:  
**\$572 million**



Supports **5,214 jobs**

## The Competition Sector

Competition Sector Total Economic Impact of:

**\$270 million**



Supports **3,346 jobs**



Adds **\$162 million** in value to the state economy



## The Recreation Sector



Supports **4,971 jobs**



Adds **\$234 million** in value to the state economy

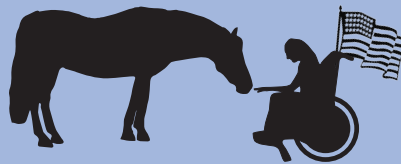
Recreation Sector Total Economic Impact of:  
**\$382 million**



## The Equine Therapy Sector



Adds **\$8.4 million** in value to the state economy



**40** Therapeutic Riding Centers Including over a dozen Veterans groups

### Information provided by

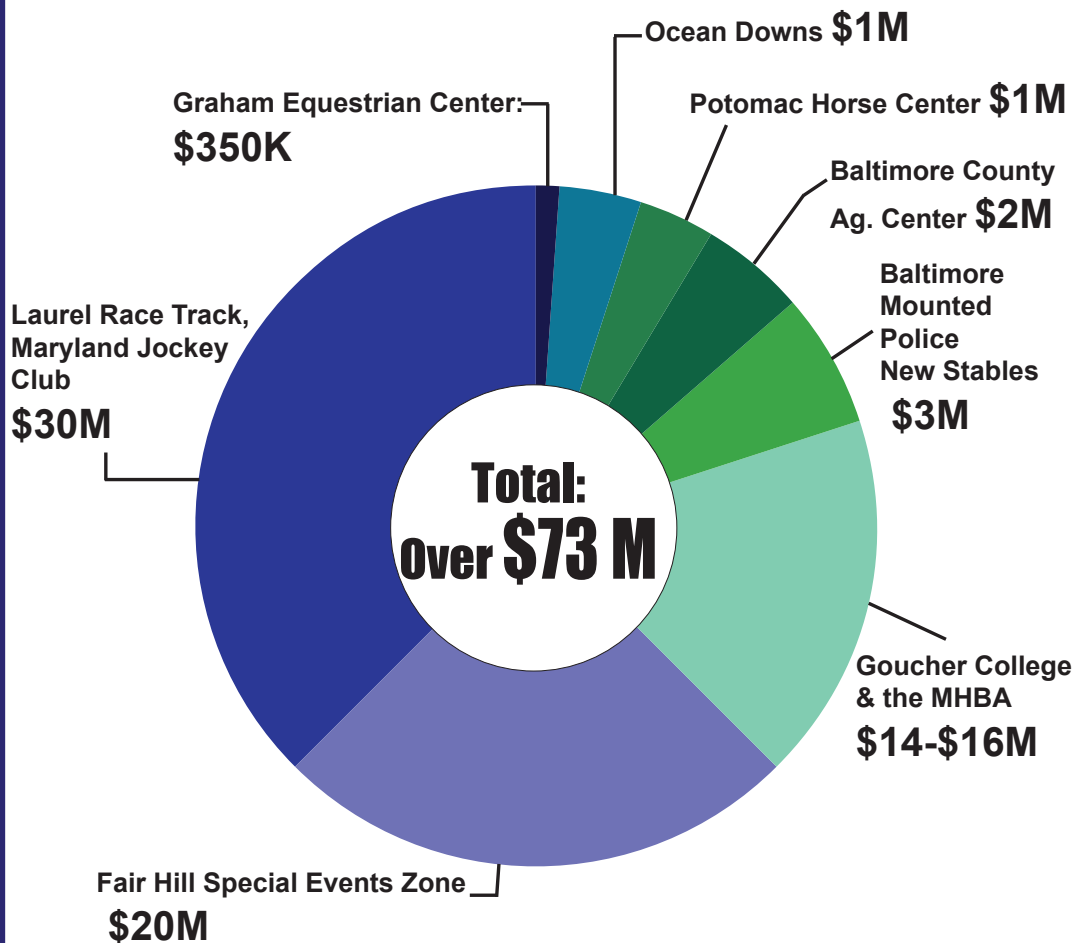
The American Horse Council Foundation 2017

Institute for Governmental Service and Research University of Maryland 2017

Maryland Equine Census, USDA 2010

# Investing in Maryland Horse Industry Infrastructure:

Improvements currently planned or in the pipeline



- \$30M Laurel Race Track, Maryland Jockey Club has spent over \$30M
- \$20M Fair Hill Special Events Zone Phase I, construction starts Fall 2019
- \$14M Goucher College & Maryland Horse Breeders Assoc. Equestrian Center
- \$3M Baltimore Mounted Police New Stables, B&O Railroad Museum
- \$2M Baltimore County Ag. Center Show Ring, under construction
- \$1M Potomac Horse Center
- \$1M Ocean Downs Racing Admin. Building & Testing Barn
- \$350K Graham Equestrian Center

