



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY  
PARK & RECREATION ADMINISTRATORS  
(MACPRA)

**SB522 State and Local Parks – Child Safe Zone Program – Establishment  
(Equitable Access to Safe Parks Act)**

*Establishing the Child Safe Zone Program in the Department of Natural Resources to install signage in prominent areas of each State park identifying the parks as Child Safe Zones; to provide funding for capital and operating expenses associated with enhancing public safety in State and local parks;*

February 28, 2022

**MACPRA Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

The Maryland Association of County Park and Recreation Administrators recognizes the importance of safety in State and local parks. SB522 creates a “Child Safe Zone Program” that helps identify certain State and local parks as “Safe Zones”, and creates a special fund to assist with capital and operating expenses associated with enhancing public safety in parks. While the proposed start-up fund of \$1M in FY24 would provide an additional opportunity for State and local park agencies to address important security measures, its impact will be limited due to the immense need that exists throughout the State.

MACPRA does, however, support the general intent of the bill and offers its support to directly interface with bill sponsors, as needed, to make it a more effective piece of legislation. For example, clarification language may be required to:

- Determine, specifically, how grant funds would be administered and allocated;
- Explain whether municipalities would be eligible to directly apply for funds within the “Child Safe Zone Fund”;
- List what requirements are placed on local governments, if any, in the proposed legislation;
- More clearly define the 50’ park boundary as the “inside boundary” of the property (page 2, lines 27-28);
- Include “signage” under eligible infrastructure improvements at local parks (page 3, lines 27-29);

MACPRA offers its ongoing support and urges the Committee to give a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

*The Maryland Association of County Park & Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) is an affiliate of the Maryland Association of Counties and represents the Parks and Recreation departments of all 23 counties and Baltimore City – the professionals engaged in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services throughout Maryland.*