

SARA N. LOVE  
Legislative District 16  
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation  
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 210  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3454 · 301-858-3454  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3454  
Sara.Love@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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**Sponsor Testimony for HB 116 –  
The Right to Engage in Equine Activities**  
Delegate Sara Love

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

For the record, I am Delegate Sara Love here to present House bill 116, establishing the right to engage in equine activities in Maryland.

Maryland has a long tradition of horseback riding. It is an integral part of our culture, our heritage, our land use, our economy, our recreation, our veterans' support, our Maryland pride.

Hundreds of thousands of Marylanders participate in equine activities every year, whether they enjoy recreational riding, they engage in competition, they are part of - or enjoy watching - the racing sector, or they benefit from the therapeutic riding programs.

We have several horse racing facilities, including Pimlico and Laurel. We host the historic Preakness horse race, part of the storied Triple Crown. The General Assembly has spent a lot of time, and the State a lot of money, on legislation supporting horse racing.

Every county in Maryland is home to thousands of horses. In fact, there are more horses per square mile in Maryland than in any state in the country. Over 705,000 acres are used for equine activities, which is almost 10% of Maryland's total land area and over 25% of Maryland's agricultural land. Furthermore, pastures are among the best filtering devices to protect the Chesapeake Bay from harmful runoff.

The Maryland Horse Industry provides over \$2.1 billion in economic impact. There is \$78 million in tax revenue. There are close to 30,000 industry jobs, plus the other jobs supporting the industry such as construction.

For the foregoing reasons, I request a favorable report on HB 116.