

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 28, 2022

The House Environment and Transportation Committee
SB 64 Beach Erosion Control District - State- and City-Owned Structures
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee for the opportunity to respectfully ask for your support of Senate Bill 64 Beach Erosion Control District-State-and-City-Owned Structures as amended. This legislation has been requested by the Town of Ocean City.

This bill exempts the repair, renovation, reconstruction, or expansion of an existing structure owned by the State or the Mayor and City Council of Ocean City from an existing prohibition against land clearing, construction activity, or the construction of or placement of permanent structures within the Beach Erosion Control District as long as the project does not result in any significant permanent environmental damage to the district as determined by the Department of Natural Resources.

Under current law, any construction activity with some specific, narrow exceptions is prohibited in the Beach Erosion Control District. This means that under current law certain important Ocean City facilities cannot be repaired or replaced including the Ocean City Amusement Pier, the Ocean City Inlet Parking Lot, and the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum.

Senate Bill 64 as amended would provide a mechanism to repair, replace and, with specific limitations, add on to these existing facilities with the approval of the Ocean City Mayor and Council and the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. The bill only applies to existing facilities owned by the State or Ocean City.

The immediate need for passage of SB 64 is to bring the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum, built in 1891, into compliance with the federal Americans for Disabilities Act and current fire safety codes. With the passage of last year's capital budget, the Maryland General Assembly approved \$600,000 for ADA upgrades to be made to the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum. However, based on review by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, DNR cannot approve the ADA upgrades work to the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum without a legislative change to Section 8-1102 of the Natural Resources Article.

We in Ocean City are excited about the upgrades to the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum as this site is the heart of telling Ocean City's story and the history of the U.S. Life-Saving Service.

This bill takes a responsible approach on allowing this priority project and other projects to move forward by making clear that it applies to existing facilities only; must have the approval of the Ocean City Mayor, Council and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources; and must not result in any significant permanent environmental damage.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report of SB 64 and invite you for an adventure to visit the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum in the future. Thank you for your kind consideration.