

TERESA E. REILLY
Legislative District 35A
Cecil and Harford Counties

DEPUTY MINORITY WHIP

Health and Government
Operations Committee

Subcommittees

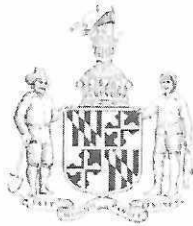
Health Occupations and
Long Term Care

Public Health and
Minority Health Disparities

Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee

Chair

Harford County House Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 325
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3278 · 301-858-3278
800-492-7122 Ext. 3278
Fax 410-841-3190 · 301-858-3190
Teresa.Reilly@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1140 – Port of Deposit State Historical Park – Included Areas

March 8, 2023

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

A late amendment to SB 541 Great Maryland Outdoors Act in 2022 added a requirement for the establishment of a Port of Deposit State Historical Park (Park) and established a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to advise the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on the scope and management of the Park in addition to the funding amount necessary to establish the Park. HB1140 is an emergency bill that seeks to address concerns identified by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the DNR, with the transfer of a portion of property within the Bainbridge Naval Training Center site, overseen by the Bainbridge Development Corporation (BDC), to establish a Park.

HB 1140, like its crossfile SB 517, is supported by 5 of the 6 Delegates and both Senators from the Cecil County Delegation.

The Stakeholder Advisory Committee worked with DNR to identify and review the suitability of specified property within the Bainbridge Naval Training Center site (BNTC) for inclusion in the Park, including the Historic Tome School for Boys, the Snow Hill Archeological Site and the

adjacent wooded conservation area as required by the Great Maryland Outdoors Act. The official DNR report submitted to the General Assembly identified concerns with several hazardous conditions and site contamination that present obstacles for transferring the required property by the specified date of June 1, 2023. The report also made a number of recommendations for actions needed to fully investigate the safety concerns, which require adequate time to implement.

The DNR report, which I have provided for your review, stressed that *“more due diligence is needed to adequately determine the type and level of public access that may be possible or even practicable given the physical, environmental, archaeological, historical, and legal constraints on these sites.*

The deadlines and constraints codified in statute by the General Assembly, unaccompanied by a funding source, do not allow for that type of due diligence to occur. Allowing time and flexibility to conduct a more thorough planning process that includes robust stakeholder engagement at all levels is needed.

This will present the best opportunity for developing a clear, common, shared vision for the future of the sites together with the identification of potential resources to achieve the shared vision. Such a process would yield much better results and provide the greatest chance of achieving success for the community and the State of Maryland.” (page 11, Report on the Port of Deposit State Historical Park- DNR)

Nothing in this bill will alter the continued protection of the historically and culturally important areas encompassed by the Historic Tome School for Boys and the Snow Hill Archeological Site, which are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) currently has and will continue to have a statutorily required obligation to protect the future disposition of these significant sites including any alterations, demolition, or adaptive reuse of the property.

HB 1140, with the Senate amendments and those suggested by DNR, extends the property transfer date of suitable areas of up to 150 acres from the BDC to the DNR for the creation of the Park, to June 1, 2025, which provides the necessary time for due diligence in completing soil contamination studies, clean-up cost analysis and the identification of potential funding sources for the costly remediation work that will be required to ensure the creation of a park that meets safety standards for recreational use.

I respectfully ask for a FAVORABLE report from the Committee on this emergency local bill.

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly
District 35A
Cecil and Harford Counties