



House Bill 299

Environment - Synthetic Turf - Chain of Custody

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Date: February 15, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko and Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS HB 299 WITH AMENDMENTS**. The bill seeks to create a system whereby synthetic turf can be tracked through its entire lifecycle, from production to eventual recycling or disposal. Counties support this effort and offer friendly, clarifying amendments.

Synthetic turf is a widely used product in the parks and recreation space meant to mimic grass fields. The turf is primarily used to cover spaces that experience a high volume of use and where natural grass may offer an unreasonable expense or be labor intensive to maintain. High volume usage of artificial fields can, overall, reduce the need for expensive and more rigorously maintained natural fields.

Counties support the general purpose of HB 299 establishing a statewide inventory of synthetic turf fields through a chain of custody system. MACo does offer three friendly amendments that seek simply to clarify certain provisions within the bill:

On page 4, in line 17, after “(7)” insert “**WITHIN REASON AND RELATED TO THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY FOR SYNTHETIC TURF,**”

and after line 20 insert, “**(E) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES THAT THERE MAY BE VARIATIONS IN THE RECORDED WEIGHT OF TURF INFILL AT INSTALLATION AND REMOVAL. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHOULD BE INTERPRETED TO PENALIZE A CUSTODIAN SHOULD THE REPORTED WEIGHT TOTALS VARY.**”.

MACo welcomes the bill sponsor’s recognition of county concerns and her work in addressing them.

Counties support the intent of HB 299 and believe that MACo’s friendly amendments will help ensure an unbroken chain of custody for artificial turf. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for HB 299.