

Susan O'Neill, Executive Director
Upper Shore Regional Council
122 North Cross Street
Chestertown, MD 21620

TESTIMONY ON SB#0396:

Economic Development - Upper Shore Regional Council - Membership

POSITION: FAVORABLE

TO: Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Susan O'Neill

My name is Susan O'Neill and I am the Executive Director of the Upper Shore Regional Council. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0396 for the purpose of altering the membership of certain voting members of the Upper Shore Regional Council.

The Upper Shore Regional Council is one of 5 tri-county councils in Maryland. We represent Cecil County, Kent County, and Queen Anne's County.

The Upper Shore Regional Council fosters planning and development for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's counties. It affords federal, state, county, and local governments a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities to improve the quality of life in the Upper Shore Region of Maryland.

Created in 2003, USRC original voting members were:

- 3 Cecil County Commissioners
- 3 Kent County Commissioners
- 3 Queen Anne's County Commissioners
- 1 Municipality rep from each county
- State legislators with most of their district within the region

In 2010, Cecil County voters ratified the charter form of government. It is now governed by a county executive and a county council. SB #0396 will allow the Cecil County Executive a vote on the USRC. Therefore, Cecil County's voting membership will comprise the county executive and two representatives from Cecil County Council.

The Upper Shore Regional Council voted to support this change in Cecil County's voting membership at their January 4, 2023, full council meeting.

Thank you for your time.