



February 1, 2023

Senate Bill 162

**Transportation - Maryland Aviation Commission - Duties,
Composition, and Member Orientation**

Senate Finance Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 162 – Transportation - Maryland Aviation Commission - Duties, Composition, and Member Orientation. Senate Bill 162 requires the Maryland Aviation Commission to establish policies, based on accepted scientific research on creating and maintaining healthy and livable communities, to best mitigate any negative impacts of the local aviation and airport industries, and requires the Commission to consider information and advice from certain stakeholders in carrying out its duties. It further requires that certain members of the Commission appointed by the Governor are to be selected from candidates designated by the DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable, requires commissioners to receive an orientation relating to the Commission’s duties, and expands the Commission’s annual report.

Noise pollution and bombardment is a significant issue for residents in communities along flight paths, which go directly over schools, parks, wildlife areas, shopping centers, and residential areas. Although the Federal Aviation Administration and airports have taken steps to mitigate some noise associated with flight paths, communities in Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery, and Baltimore Counties continue to experience adverse impacts. Data from the Maryland Department of Transportation shows that BWI receives over 1,000 complaints each day.

Residents in these communities experience sleep disruption and difficulty enjoying the outdoors. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that airport noise pollution can be much more than just a nuisance, and can actually have serious health implications. According to the journal *Noise & Health*, aircraft noise can disrupt sleep, adversely affect academic performance in children, and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease for people living in the vicinity of airports. Exposure to high levels of air traffic noise has also been associated with high blood pressure and anxiety.

The modifications to the Commission accomplished by this bill will ensure that the Commission has the right people at the table and the right information to make informed decisions to protect the health of our communities and minimize preventable health-related outcomes.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 162.

Steuart Pittman
County Executive