



**CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

**Mark Belton**  
County Administrator

March 21, 2024

Bill: HOUSE BILL 1321 - Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations – Property Dedication and Fee  
Committee: Senate – Education, Energy, and the Environment/Budget & Taxation  
Position: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the County Commissioners for Charles County, this letter is to express support for HB 1321 – Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations – Property Dedication and Fee. HB 1321 was requested by the County Commissioners at the request of our Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism.

HB 1321 allows Charles County to incorporate dedication of real property for recreation, or the payment of a fee to be used by the County for the purchase, development, and improvement of real property for recreational facilities in its subdivision regulations. As written, HB 1321 applies to all code home rule counties in the Southern Maryland class, however, Charles County is the only code home rule county in its class.

Currently, Charles County requires developers of residential communities meeting certain criteria to include recreation amenities within their subdivisions. The recreation amenity is maintained by a common ownership organization (i.e. homeowners’ associations), as the property owner upon which the amenity is located. As such, the quality of the amenity and its upkeep varies greatly from neighborhood to neighborhood. We believe a more global approach to the requirement for recreation amenities should be considered as part of the subdivision regulations. HB 1321 enables the County to amend our local subdivision regulations to allow for dedication of land to the County or a fee- in-lieu of the dedication to the County. With the passage of HB 1321, we will have the ability to aggregate fees for use in developing recreational opportunities to serve the community, and consider the needs of the region beyond what is possible in current the program. Similar regulations are already found in at least two other Maryland jurisdictions: Baltimore County and Prince George’s County.

For the reasons stated herein, we encourage a FAVORABLE report on HB 1321. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support.

Sincerely,

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President  
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Delegation