



COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

JULIE K. HUMMER
Fourth District

RE: Senate Bill 595

Position: Support

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and members of the committee,

Thank you for your hard work each and every day for our great state and thank you to Delegate Lehman for sponsoring this legislation. As the District 4 Anne Arundel County Councilmember, I represent Laurel Race Course and its surrounding areas. I also Chair the Laurel Race Course Impact Fee Advisory Committee that makes annual grant recommendations for projects benefiting the communities within a 3-mile radius of the racetrack.

Within this 3-mile radius is the racetrack and its facilities, thus it includes hundreds of racetrack employees, many of whom live on the property. With the temporary closure of Pimlico, additional track workers such as grooms, hotwalkers, and jockeys, have relocated to Laurel. Many of these workers are in need of additional physical and mental health services, drug and alcohol support and treatment, transportation, and nutrition and wellness programs. While our current committee recommends approximately \$350,000 funding for programs and projects around the track each year, the added workers and specific needs of the track employees are greater than this allocation can address. Our funds already go for important community services such as food relief, outreach to the elderly and people with disabilities, afterschool enrichment programs, park enhancements, and support for the fire department. While we recognize and wish to assist the needs of the track workers, we already must deny numerous applications a year because of funding limitations.

This legislation would authorize additional funding specifically for the backstretch workers at Laurel Race Course for the next couple of years until Pimlico reopens and the track employees relocate to new facilities. I ask that you support this bill so that our community may better serve the needs of these workers who are experiencing uncertainty and relocation over the coming years as horse racing evolves in the state of Maryland. While \$500,000 may not seem like much in the context of a \$67 billion state budget, it would have a huge impact on a group of workers vital to the horse racing industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie K. Hummer".

Julie K. Hummer
Anne Arundel County Council