

# **RJR-(MTC.MASFMA) HB321 Synthetic Turf Study - Dead**

Uploaded by: Jason Bowers

Position: FAV



Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman  
Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair  
House Environment & Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: *House Bill 321: Environment - Synthetic Turf Industry and Disposal Study - Deadline Extension - SUPPORT***

**February 23, 2026**

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Management Association (MASFMA) and the Maryland Turfgrass Council (MTC), we write this letter of information pertaining to the introduction of House Bill 321; entitled: *Environment - Synthetic Turf Industry and Disposal Study - Deadline Extension*.

MTC represents all areas of the turf industry including golf, sports turf, sod producers, landscape, lawncare and commercial vendors and suppliers. The Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Management Association (MASFMA) is a non-profit organization that is composed of sports turf field managers and workers from Maryland, Delaware, Washington D.C., and Northern Virginia. Once again, MASFMA has partnered with Maryland Turfgrass Council (MTC) this year to bring a more unified front from all aspects of our industry.

As written, House Bill 321, is merely amending the current law to extend the deadline by which the Department of the Environment is required to submit a report on the synthetic turf industry and synthetic turf disposal from July 1, 2026, to January 15, 2027.

Two years ago, MTC and MASFMA proudly supported the successful enactment of House Bill 457 which required the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), in consultation with the Synthetic Turf Council and other specified stakeholders, including local governments, county school systems, and higher education facilities, to conduct a study on synthetic turf, existing synthetic turf fields in the State, and the synthetic turf industry in the State.

Over the last 18 months, MTC and MASFMA have assisted MDE's research to fulfill the legislative reporting mandates that will include: (1) industry information and background; (2) methodologies used for data collection, including public hearings and other public outreach; (3) current industry practices and guidelines relating to the sale, maintenance, reuse, and disposal of synthetic turf; (4) current industry disposal methods of synthetic turf, including known disposal locations; (5) proper and improper disposal methods of synthetic turf; (6) current recycling rates and methods of synthetic turf and future recycling proposals; (7) factors influencing disposal and recycling; (8) case studies and examples; and (9) proposals for improving recycling rates and waste management.

Currently, there are no state laws in Maryland to specifically address synthetic turf or turf infill. Moreover, to MTC and MASFMA's knowledge no other state in the nation has legislated a State-issued report on this issue. The composition of artificial turf is complex, making it challenging and costly to recycle. Even now, with consumers demanding more sustainable options, turf manufacturers and

companies are still seeking efforts, through new and emerging technologies, to recycle or repurpose these shell-life materials. And while some states and cities have taken action on banning new installation of synthetic turf, it does not resolve the issue of existing synthetic turf at our schools and parks that are quickly nearing their 10-year life cycles. If Maryland truly wants to combat this issue and set forth standards that could be adopted nationwide, we can't risk this report (and the ongoing collaboration and analysis between the State and industry) to be incomplete or rushed due to a legislative deadline.

It is for these reasons, MTC and MASFMA firmly supports the passage of HB321 and humbly seeks this committee for a FAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,



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Clint Steele  
President, MASFMA



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Logan Freeman  
President, MTC

**HB321 LEHMAN WRITTEN TESTIMONY.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV

DELEGATE MARY A. LEHMAN  
*Legislative District 21*  
Prince George's and  
Anne Arundel Counties

Government, Labor, and  
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*Chair*  
Local Government/Bi-County  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 321 – Synthetic Turf Industry and Disposal Study – Deadline Extension**

**FAVORABLE**

GOOD AFTERNOON, CHAIR KORMAN, VICE CHAIR GUYTON, AND ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

FOR THE RECORD I AM DELEGATE MARY LEHMAN AND I AM HERE TO URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT ON HB321.

HB321 EXTENDS THE DEADLINE FOR THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT (MDE) TO CONDUCT A STUDY AND REPORT BACK TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE SYNTHETIC TURF INDUSTRY'S PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES ON SALES, MAINTENANCE, REUSE AND DISPOSAL OF SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS. THE UPDATED DEADLINE WOULD BE JANUARY 15, 2027. THIS NEW DEADLINE WOULD PROVIDE MDE AND ITS CONSULTANT AN EXTRA SIX MONTHS TO ENSURE A HIGH QUALITY AND COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, WHICH WOULD BENEFIT OUR STATE AND ITS RESIDENTS.

THE 2024 LAW THAT I SPONSORED REQUIRED MDE TO SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL OF SYNTHETIC FIELDS IN MARYLAND BY JULY 1, 2026. THE BILL DIRECTED MDE TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN THE REPORT:

- INDUSTRY INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND;
- METHODOLOGIES USED FOR DATA COLLECTION, INCLUDING PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER PUBLIC OUTREACH;
- CURRENT INDUSTRY PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE SALE, MAINTENANCE, REUSE, AND DISPOSAL OF SYNTHETIC TURF;
- CURRENT INDUSTRY DISPOSAL METHODS OF SYNTHETIC TURF, INCLUDING KNOWN DISPOSAL LOCATIONS;
- PROPER AND IMPROPER DISPOSAL METHODS OF SYNTHETIC TURF;

- CURRENT RECYCLING RATES AND METHODS FOR SYNTHETIC TURF AND FUTURE RECYCLING PROPOSALS;
- FACTORS INFLUENCING DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING;
- CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES; AND
- PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING RECYCLING RATES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT.

I PUT FORWARD THIS BILL BECAUSE LAST FALL, MDE REPRESENTATIVES PROVIDED ME WITH AN UPDATE ON THE REPORT AND THE AGENCY HAD NOT MADE MEANINGFUL PROGRESS DESPITE EXTENSIVE RESEARCH ON THE NUMBER, LOCATION, AND OWNERSHIP OF SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS IN MARYLAND CONDUCTED BY THE SIERRA CLUB. (THE SIERRA CLUB IDENTIFIED MORE THAN 400 SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS STATEWIDE.)

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES ASKED FOR AN ADDITIONAL YEAR TO COMPLETE THE REPORT. I DECIDED A SIX-MONTH EXTENSION WAS MORE REASONABLE. AT SOME POINT AFTER THE CONVERSATION, SECRETARY MCILWAIN DECIDED THE REPORT COULD BE DONE BY JULY 1, 2026, AND SAID SO PUBLICLY BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE A FEW WEEKS AGO. I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF A REPORT DELIVERED THIS JULY GIVEN HOW FAR BEHIND THE AGENCY SEEMS ON RESEARCH AND INFORMATION GATHERING. I WOULD PREFER THAT IT TAKE AN ADDITIONAL SIX MONTHS TO DELIVER A MORE THOROUGH AND MEANINGFUL WORK PRODUCT.

NO OTHER STATE IS DOING THIS KIND OF COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING ON THE DISPOSAL OF SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS. THE FINDINGS ARE IMPORTANT FOR SHAPING MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE POLICIES REGARDING TURF DISPOSAL IN MARYLAND AND WOULD LIKELY BE USED BY OTHER STATES.

FOR THESE REASONS, I RESPECTFULLY ASK FOR A FAVORABLE REPORT ON HB321.

THE AVERAGE LIFESPAN OF AN ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELD IS EIGHT YEARS, AT WHICH POINT THEY MUST BE REMOVED AND REPLACED.