



*Larry Hogan, Governor*  
*Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor*  
*Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary*  
*Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary*

**Bill Number:** SB 680

**Short Title:** State and Local Parks - Playgrounds Accessibility - Communication Boards

**Department's Position:** Letter of Information

**Explanation of Department's Position**

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR or Department) provides the following information on SB 680, which requires the department and local governing bodies to construct a communication board in each public playground by October 1, 2027.

*Maryland Park Service (MPS):* SB 860 requires MPS to install communication boards at all 38 playgrounds around the state. The bill also requires the department to use Program Open Space (POS) funds provided under Section 5-904 of the Natural Resources Article for the construction of communication boards at playgrounds under their jurisdictions. POS funds are provided under Section 5-903 of the Natural Resources Article.

*Program Open Space Local:* The DNR Land Acquisition and Planning (LAP) Unit administers POS-Local, which provides financial and technical assistance to local subdivisions (counties and municipalities) for the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas. Projects funded through POS-Local are determined by the local jurisdictions that submit applications for funding to the Department for review and approval. While local governments apply for POS-Local funds to design and construct playgrounds, there are also other fund sources available for these types of projects, including local funds and other grant programs. Due to this, local governments may choose to use fund sources other than POS-Local for communication boards at playgrounds. **The department feels it may be better to authorize the use of funding for this purpose rather than requiring it; provide options rather than mandates.**

For any additional information, please feel free to contact our Legislative and Constituent Services Director, Bunky Luffman.