

22 02 08 AM SB 345 Written.pdf

Uploaded by: Al Martinez

Position: FAV

My name is Al Martinez. My wife and I live on the East side of Tuckahoe State Park.

We moved to Maryland to be able to enjoy our love of horses and horseback riding.

Building a house and horse stable on land against the park to be able to trail ride was a dream fulfilled.

We have since gotten to know and make many friends in the horse riding community. We all share our interest in the activities and benefits of horseback riding.

Becoming members of the local equestrian club has led us to support and participate in the many equine related programs to enrich the lives of many people in our area.

Equine education for young and old, equine fun activities, various equine based competitions and celebrations, equine related social events, scholarship programs, fund raising for cancer and various other causes are just some of the benefits of our local participation in equine activities.

The many members of our club, and service providers to the horse community, such as, veterinary clinics and hospitals, farriers, tack shops, agricultural supply companies to name a few, are a significant part of our local economy.

Please vote to pass this bill. Thank you.

Support of SB 345 Agriculture - Right to Engage in

Uploaded by: Colby Ferguson

Position: FAV



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 8, 2022

To: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of SB 345 - Agriculture - Right to Engage in Equine Activities**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 345, legislation that simply declares that the intent of the General Assembly is that residents of Maryland have a right to engage in equine activities subject to regulations and restrictions under laws enacted by the General Assembly.

The 2018 Economic Impact Study produced by the American Horse Council confirms that Maryland's horse industry adds more than \$1.3 billion to Maryland's economy. The report found that the horse industry total employment impact is more than 21,000 jobs, including a more than \$500 million impact from the horse racing sector alone. With more than 101,000 horses, Maryland boasts more horses -- 10.5 horses per square mile -- than any other state in the nation.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:

- We support the recognition of equine as part of the agricultural industry and not as companion animals. Riding lessons, boarding, or training given on a farm, and pleasure horses should be considered a part of the normal agriculture practices.
- We strongly support responsible and workable actions designed to permit and protect the privilege and rights of farmers, commercial fisherman, and aquaculturalists, to produce without undue or unreasonable restrictions, regulations, or legislation. We support actions to ensure that farmers are protected from liability and nuisance suits when carrying out normal production practices.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 345 AND REQUEST A FAVORABLE REPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396

Testimony - Right to Equine Activities.pages.pdf

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: FAV

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on
SB 345 - Agriculture - Right to Engage in Equine Activities: SUPPORT

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based, umbrella trade association of the entire horse industry in Maryland. Our membership includes breed, interest and discipline associations, plus horse farms and stables, horse-related businesses, and horse owners representing all facets of the Maryland equestrian community, from the owners of race horses and race tracks, to the owners of international level competition horses, local sport horses, trail horses or just beloved retired companion horses. The owner of Pimlico, Laurel and Rosecroft racetracks is a member, as are vets, tack stores, and other farms, businesses and enthusiasts throughout the state. As such, we stand for over 30,000 Marylanders.



MHC supports this bill, which would establish the intent of the General Assembly that residents of Maryland have a right to engage in equine activities subject to regulations under laws enacted by the General Assembly. The bill is a formal legislative recognition of the vital role played by the state's equestrians in Maryland's cultural heritage, social fabric, recreational resources, and environmental and economic health. In addition, the bill will add the weight of legislative intent when questions arise at the state and local level concerning land use, resource allocation for parks and trails, etc.

Horses and horse sports have been a part of Maryland life since before this nation was created. The Maryland Jockey Club, founded in 1743, is the oldest sporting organization - of any type - in North America. Today, there are over 100,000 horses in Maryland (more per square mile than any state in the Union), and 51.8% of Maryland households contain horse enthusiasts. The majority of Maryland riders are trail riders. Each year, there are about 1500 equine 4H projects in the state, 55 high school equestrian teams, 22 pony clubs and 12 college teams. Maryland is also an international equestrian powerhouse, with the Preakness that dates to 1875, and the new Maryland 5* at Fair Hill, one of only seven such events in the world.

There are horses in every county in the state. There are 200 equine organizations and almost 800 licensed stables. As a result of the pandemic, Marylanders across the state have flocked to riding centers as a way to enjoy outdoor recreation in a naturally socially-distanced sport that provides both physical exercise and the mental health benefits that come from interaction with animals and the natural world. The equestrian community provides additional mental and physical health services through 40 therapeutic riding programs that serve those with mental, physical and developmental challenges, including wounded warriors and their families.

MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL
PO BOX 606
LISBON, MD 21765

Equine activities also offer environmental and quality of life benefits to the entire population, not just equestrians. A maintained pasture is second only to forest in its effectiveness in filtering runoff into local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. And the equestrian community supports the conservation, preservation and management of open space and natural resources using primarily private dollars.

The Maryland horse industry represents \$2.1 billion in economic impact; 28,000 direct jobs; \$1 billion in annual spending by participants; \$78 million in tax revenue. At last count, there were 16,000 equine-related properties occupying over 705,000 acres (almost 10% of Maryland's total land area, and over 25% of Maryland's agricultural land). The racing and competition sectors support local economies by drawing in out-of-state dollars that are spent on food, lodging and transportation. The industry also supports local hay, grain, and straw farmers with \$80,000,000 in annual expenditures.

SB 345 recognizes the importance of the equestrian industry to Maryland life.

We urge the Committee to give SB 345 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,
Maryland Horse Council
(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773)



MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL
PO BOX 606
LISBON, MD 21765

Senate Bill 345 - MASCD - Support .pdf

Uploaded by: Jen Nelson

Position: FAV



February 8, 2022

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chairman
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Re: Senate Bill 345 – Right to Engage in Equine Activities

Position: *Support*

Chairman Pinsky & Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) to express our support for Senate Bill 345 – Right to Engage in Equine Activities. This bill protects the right of all Maryland residents who wish to engage in equine activities.

The Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, incorporated in 1956, promotes practical and effective soil, water, and natural resource related programs to all citizens through individual conservation districts on a voluntary basis through leadership, education, cooperation, and local direction. By supporting this bill, MASCD continues their legacy of supporting natural resource programs and promotes public open space access to all Marylanders.

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 345, which shows your dedicated support to the entire State of Maryland and the agricultural community. Thank you for your kind consideration and attention to this legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts

SB0345 Favorable Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: June Mellinger

Position: FAV

Supporting Testimony on SB0345

Agriculture – Right to Engage in Equine Activities

As a member of Trail Riders of America (TROT), I am concerned about having quiet and safe places to ride that our Maryland State Parks provided. The public has the right to clean and safe access through Maryland's state parks and those lands that are held in lease agreements. We should be able to rely on Emergency services and First Responders to reach us in the event we are injured on the trail or need immediate attention in the event of a medical emergency. Every second counts!

The Maryland Horse Council regularly hears complaints about the problems individuals encounter when accessing public trails.

Recent examples include:

- Fences or barbed wire set up by tenants leasing land. Evidence of these fences are often rusty and found buried along the edges of the tree lines.
- Abandoned machinery, household appliances and junked cars left to the elements leaking various environmental contaminants hidden among leaves and heavy brush.
- Wood piles and downed trees often block access for emergency responders creating tripping hazards for them as well as other individuals and their animals.
- Crops are sometimes planted right up against tree lines causing individuals to find alternative paths which often times result in more serious and dangerous situations.

Finding alternative paths often result in using public roads which are not safe, even with conservative speed limits. In some cases, individuals can also find themselves using storm water easements, which defeat their purpose. Emergency responders, who find they need to transport life saving equipment and/or move injured individuals, can use up valuable time resulting in further injury and/or even death.

The State's efforts to improve public park access while investing in outdoor recreation can't be realized if lands are unsafe and/or inaccessible. Please help ensure open access and public safety in our parks and other lands held by the state.

Respectfully submitted,
June Mellinger
Lusby, MD 20657
443-532-5044

SB345_FAV_AtticksGrowFortify.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Atticks

Position: FAV



Bill #	SB345
Position	SUPPORT

February 8, 2022

Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

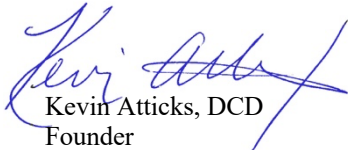
Dear Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair and Members of the Committee—

The equine industry holds an incredible place in Maryland history of racing, its preservation of land, community recreation and in the field of therapy.

Our study of value-added agriculture (2020, available via www.growandfortify.com) noted equine activities add over \$1.3 billion annually to Maryland's economy and supports over 21,000 jobs.

We urge your favorable consideration to codify that Marylanders have a right to engage in equine activities.

Sincerely,



Kevin Atticks, DCD
Founder

*Cultivating an environment where value-added agricultural producers,
startups, operators and growers innovate and thrive.*

22 02 08 SF SB 345 Written.pdf

Uploaded by: Stacy Frank

Position: FAV

SB 345 – Written Testimony

February 4, 2022

I am writing to express a favorable view of SB 345, the “Right to Ride” bill.

I have been involved in equestrian activities for nearly 60 years as both a professional, competitor and leisure participant. When my husband and I were searching for a property for our horse farm 20 years ago we looked in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware and ultimately decided on Maryland. Maryland’s history and current involvement in equine related activities and businesses made it the ideal location.

We are Caroline County residents and live right across the street from Tuckahoe State Park which is the home of the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center (TEC) and miles of multi-use trails which are shared by riders, hikers, bikers, birders, wildlife enthusiasts and families just looking to enjoy being out in nature, especially during these difficult COVID times.

We support this bill because Equestrian activities are an important part of Maryland’s economy and contribute to the environmentally friendly use of the State’s land and natural resources as well as providing wholesome activities for residents of every persuasion, age or ethnicity.

Please vote in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Stacy Frank
TEC board member
Caroline County resident
And life-long equestrienne