

SB 278 – MARYLAND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH COMMISSION

Highlights of the bill include:

Maintains the current membership of the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland and adds the following representatives:

- Four new state departments (Maryland Departments of Agriculture, Business and Economic Development and Natural Resources and the Maryland State Department of Education);
- Two new representatives of organizations (environmental community and the commercial building and development industry); and
- Nine new regional representatives (Western Maryland – 1, Southern Maryland – 1, Eastern Shore – 1, Washington Metropolitan area – 3, and Baltimore Metropolitan area – 3);

Creates 5-year terms for the appointed members of the Commission;

Sunsets the Commission after 10 years;

Refocuses the charge of the Commission from short-term tasks to long-term review of growth and development by:

- evaluating the progress of achieving the state's planning visions;
- identifying infrastructure needs;
- promoting planning coordination;
- evaluating the implementation of last year's Smart, Green, and Growing legislation

Requiring an annual report on Commission activities to the Governor and General Assembly; and

Appointment of a Vice-Chair by the Governor.

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission transforms the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development into a permanent commission to advise on growth and development issues in the State. Prior to the creation of the Task Force in 2007, there was no statewide forum where stakeholders could gather to discuss growth and development issues and policies. The former Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Commission, which was created by the 1992 Growth Act, was allowed to sunset in 2003. The creation of a permanent Commission creates a broader and more established forum to consider and make recommendations on growth and development issues.