

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No.

Resolution No. 26-25

Councilmembers Kach, Patoka, Marks & Jones

By the County Council, May 5, 2025

A RESOLUTION of the Baltimore County Council establishing the Baltimore County Equine Legacy Area.

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that equine activities provide many recreational and cultural benefits; and

WHEREAS, Baltimore County is home to a historic, vibrant, and world-renowned equestrian community, which includes steeplechase, thoroughbred breeding and racing, as well as therapeutic and pleasure riding; and

WHEREAS, since the 1700's, Baltimore County has been the center of Maryland's equestrian industry, with thousands of acres worth of terrain ideal for pleasure riding and steeplechasing located in the Worthington, Green Spring, and Long Green Valleys; and

WHEREAS, in 1894, the first Maryland Hunt Cup race was held in Baltimore County and in 1929, the Maryland Horse Breeders Association was formed in Baltimore County, becoming the first thoroughbred breeding organization in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, today, Baltimore County remains the center of Maryland's equestrian industry, with 8,950 horses (more than any other county), 1,540 stables, and 30,000 acres of land devoted to equine-related activity, according to the Maryland Horse Census and the USDA; and

WHEREAS, a 2023 economic impact study released by the American Horse Council

shows that Maryland's horse industry grew 38% between 2017 and 2022, from \$2.1 billion to \$2.9 billion, accounting for over 28,000 Maryland jobs and about \$1.77 billion in added value to the State's economy; and

WHEREAS, in particular, Baltimore County's equestrian industry accounts for \$1.87 million in steeplechasing tourism dollars spent annually, \$17.5 million in horse-related capital expenditures, and \$1.1 billion in non-horse assets; and

WHEREAS, in addition to its positive economic impacts, equine activities serve to protect the open landscapes, valleys, forests, and streams of the County's rural area; and

WHEREAS, as other equine areas around the country have demonstrated, having a contiguous area enables the businesses that support the equine industry to grow; and

WHEREAS, the horse industry has thrived in Baltimore County for a variety of reasons, but none more important than the State and County land preservation efforts, which have conserved: 17,764 acres under the Maryland Environmental Trust; 43,478 acres in the Piney Run Rural Legacy Area (part of the Maryland Rural Legacy Program); and 25,125 acres under the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF); and

WHEREAS, in addition to this State-wide focused report, a County-specific study and report were commissioned by the Valleys Planning Council (VPC) in 2022 and undertaken by the firm Unknown Studio; and

WHEREAS, Unknown Studio studied a 219 square-mile area where the equine industry has been historically based, which confirmed the many recreational, cultural, and economic benefits the industry bestows on this area and the County; and

WHEREAS, the leading recommendation from Unknown Studio's 2022 report was that the County establish an Equine Legacy Area in recognition of the horse industry's historic,

cultural, and economic impact on Baltimore County; and

WHEREAS, upon the completion of Unknown Studio's work, VPC requested that the Planning Department add an action item to *Master Plan 2030*; and

WHEREAS, in the *Resilient Economy* section of the *Vision Framework*, the third goal is to "grow, enhance and promote the County's tourist attractions" and the third action under that goal is to "study the feasibility of the proposed Equine Legacy Area and its benefits to the County's tourism industry"; and

WHEREAS, accordingly, the County Council believes at this time that the designation of an equine legacy area is appropriate and will help to protect the historic nature of this area and the benefits provided by the County's equine industry as well as help preserve the valuable natural and cultural resources upon which it relies; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the Council hereby establishes the "Baltimore County Equine Legacy Area"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Equine Legacy Area shall consist of all contiguous land in the area identified in the map attached hereto at Exhibit "A"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Baltimore County Planning Board, the Departments of Planning, Economic and Workforce Development, and Permits, Approvals, and Inspections, and the Office of Tourism for further review; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect from the date of its passage by the County Council.



LEGISLATION DETAIL

LEGISLATION

DISPOSITION

ENACTED

EFFECTIVE

AMENDMENTS

ROLL CALL - BILL

MOTION

SECOND

AYE

NAY

☐☐

Councilman Young

☐☐

Councilman Patoka

☐☐

Councilman Kach

☐☐

Councilman Jones

☐☐

Councilman Marks

☐☐

Councilman Ertel

☐☐

Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION

SECOND

AYE

NAY

☐☐

Councilman Young

☐☐

Councilman Patoka

☐☐

Councilman Kach

☐☐

Councilman Jones

☐☐

Councilman Marks

☐☐

Councilman Ertel

☐☐

Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION

SECOND

AYE

NAY

☐☐

Councilman Young

☐☐

Councilman Patoka

☐☐

Councilman Kach

☐☐

Councilman Jones

☐☐

Councilman Marks

☐☐

Councilman Ertel

☐☐

Councilman Crandell

ROLL CALL - AMENDMENTS

MOTION

SECOND

AYE

NAY

☐☐

Councilman Young

☐☐

Councilman Patoka

☐☐

Councilman Kach

☐☐

Councilman Jones

☐☐

Councilman Marks

☐☐

Councilman Ertel

☐☐

Councilman Crandell