

STATE OF MARYLAND

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Shari T. Wilson, Secretary**

**BILL NO:** SENATE BILL 60

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**POSITION:** Support

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**TITLE:** Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities - Membership

**BILL ANALYSIS:** This bill would expand the membership of the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities (CEJSC) from 15 members to 20 members. Additional members would include representatives from the Departments of Housing, Transportation, and Business and Economic Development, as well as two additional citizen members.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE:** Support

The Commission, established by Executive Order in 2001 and subsequently codified, examines issues and advises state government on policy associated with creating healthy, safe, economically vibrant, environmentally sound communities for all. The Governor appoints ten Commissioners. Others are designated representatives of state agencies involved in the issues that affect environmental justice.

In practice, the Departments of Housing and Community Development, Transportation, and Budget and Management play a significant role in the environmental issues affecting communities. By participating in the Commission, the agencies can provide better outcomes on these issues. Often communities come to the Commission to share concerns that overlap agency jurisdiction. With additional agency representation on the Commission, the State could provide improved customer service.

Increasing the number of citizen members will allow for greater diversity among Commissioners, especially in the way of geographic diversity. To date, the Commission has largely been Baltimore based, though there are thought to be significant EJ issues in other areas of the state.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,**

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