

HOUSE BILL 1434

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CF SB 353

By: ~~Delegate Amprey~~ Delegates Amprey, Addison, Behler, Boyce, Foley, Guyton, Healey, Lehman, R. Lewis, Ruth, and Terrasa

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2025

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 6, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 ~~Food Deserts Workgroup – Establishment~~

3 Maryland Food System Resiliency Council – Healthy Food Priority Area Study

4 FOR the purpose of ~~establishing the Food Deserts Workgroup~~ requiring the Maryland Food
5 System Resiliency Council to study and make recommendations regarding ~~solutions~~
6 ~~to eliminate food deserts in the State~~ strategies to attract and retain supermarket
7 retailers in healthy food priority areas; and generally relating to the ~~Food Deserts~~
8 ~~Workgroup~~ Maryland Food System Resiliency Council.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That:

11 (a) In this section, “healthy food priority area” means a predominantly
12 low-income area that has limited access to retail outlets that sell affordable, healthy foods.

13 (b) The Maryland Food System Resiliency Council shall:

14 (1) conduct an assessment of strategies to attract and retain grocery stores
15 and supermarket retailers in healthy food priority areas, including a review of existing
16 incentives and available financing programs in this State and other states; and

17 (2) prepare a report on the Council’s findings and recommendations
18 regarding strategies to attract and retain grocery stores in healthy food priority areas.
19 ~~There is a Food Deserts Workgroup.~~

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



~~(b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:~~

~~(1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;~~

~~(2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;~~

~~(3) the Secretary of Aging, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(4) the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(5) the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(6) the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(7) the Secretary of Housing and Community Development, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(8) the Secretary of Human Services, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(9) the Secretary of Planning, or the Secretary's designee;~~

~~(10) the State Superintendent of Schools, or the State Superintendent's designee;~~

~~(11) one member of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council, designated by the Secretary of Emergency Management;~~

~~(12) one representative of the Maryland Municipal League, designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the Maryland Municipal League; and~~

~~(13) the following representatives of the Maryland Association of Counties, designated by the Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Counties:~~

~~(i) one representative from a rural county;~~

~~(ii) one representative from a suburban county; and~~

~~(iii) one representative from Baltimore City.~~

~~(e) The members of the Workgroup shall elect the chair of the Workgroup.~~

~~(d) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall provide staff for the Workgroup.~~

~~(e) A member of the Workgroup:~~

~~(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but~~

~~(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.~~

~~(f) The Workgroup shall:~~

~~(1) conduct an analysis of food deserts in the State that includes:~~

~~(i) a discussion of the overall concept of food deserts and the location of food deserts in the State;~~

~~(ii) an examination of the health impacts of food deserts on the local population, including any related environmental concerns, and the impacts of food deserts on the economy;~~

~~(iii) an assessment of strategies to attract grocery stores and supermarket retailers to identified food deserts and any associated costs, including a review of existing incentives and available financing programs in this State and in other states; and~~

~~(iv) any other topic, as determined by the Workgroup, related to food deserts; and~~

~~(2) prepare a report that includes:~~

~~(i) key findings from the Workgroup's analysis conducted under paragraph (1) of this subsection; and~~

~~(ii) recommendations regarding solutions to eliminate food deserts in the State.~~

~~(g) (c)~~ On or before ~~November 1~~ December 31, 2025, the ~~Workgroup~~ Council shall submit the report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly, the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Economic Matters Committee, and the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.