From toxins to taxes: Public health policy at the Maryland General Assembly

Student: Mike Bensusic, MD
Preceptor: Delegate Clarence Lam, MD, MPH
Maryland General Assembly
- bicameral body
- 90 day session
- over 1000 bills per session
Delegate Clarence Lam
- Member of House of Delegates
- public health physician
- last session of first term in office
- first term:
  - primary sponsor of 64 bills
  - co-sponsor of 457 bills
A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Public Health – Sale and Distribution of Products Containing NMP and DCM – Prohibition

FOR the purpose of prohibiting, on or after a certain date, the sale or distribution of any paint or coating removal product that contains N-Methylpyrrolidone or methylene chloride, also known as dichloromethane; establishing a certain penalty for a certain violation; and generally relating to a prohibition on the sale or distribution of products that contain N-Methylpyrrolidone or methylene chloride.
N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP) and methylene chloride (DCM) are harmful chemicals sometimes used in paint strippers.

The federal EPA proposed bans on the use of these chemicals in paint strippers, citing “unreasonable risk of injury to health” after comprehensive risk assessments.

The proposed bans were rescinded by the Trump Administration.
Background

- **HB1138:**
  - bans the sale of any paint stripper that contains NMP or DCM, effective January 2020
  - prompts industry to adopt safer alternatives
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

HOUSE OF ORIGIN
- First Reading
- Referral to Committee
- Second Reading
- Third Reading

OPPOSITE HOUSE
- First Reading
- Referral to Committee
- Second Reading
- Third Reading
- Consideration in House of Origin (If amended in opposite house)
- Conference Committee (Only when necessary)
- TO GOVERNOR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Testimony Provided</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>written and oral</td>
<td>Maryland Environmental Health Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>written and oral</td>
<td>Maryland PIRG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral</td>
<td>Dr. Mike Benuis (intern)</td>
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<tr>
<td>written</td>
<td>Clean Production Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>written</td>
<td>Centre for Environmental Health</td>
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<td>written</td>
<td>NRDC</td>
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<td>written</td>
<td>Mind the Store Campaign (Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families)</td>
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<tr>
<td>written</td>
<td>Toxics Use Reduction Institute</td>
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House Health and Government Operations Committee (HGO)
Delegate Shane Pendergrass, Chairman
Delegate Eric M. Bromwell, Vice Chairman

Witness Guidelines and Committee FAQ’s

Witness Guidelines:

Hearing Procedures:

Public bill hearings begin at 1:00 PM. Anyone wishing to testify on any bill must sign up using one of the electronic screens outside of the committee’s hearing room. Sign up will start at 4:00 PM the day before the bill hearing and close at 12:30 PM on the day of the hearing.

Testimony:

Oral testimony will be limited to 3 minutes. PLEASE DO NOT READ YOUR TESTIMONY. People wishing to testify are encouraged to testify in panels. If you have written testimony, please submit 35 copies to the committee staff by 12:00 noon prior to the hearing. Written testimony must have a visible bill number. Late testimony will be distributed after the bill hearing.

Note: The Chairman will announce the bill order at the start of the hearing.
## General Assembly of Maryland
### Dates of Interest
#### 2018 SESSION
##### 43rd Session

**January 10**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONvenes (noon, Wednesday)**

- **January 17**  
  Final date for Governor to introduce budget bill
- **January 17**  
  Final date for the Governor to introduce capital budget bill
- **January 19**  
  10th Day — Final date for submission of Executive Orders reorganizing the Executive Branch of State Government, either Chamber may disapprove by resolution within 50 days
- **January 22**  
  13th Day — Administration bills introduced in the Senate after this date referred to Senate Rules Committee
- **January 23**  
  14th Day — **SENATE AND HOUSE BILL REQUEST GUARANTEE DATE**
- **January 24**  
  15th Day — Final date for introduction of Governor’s Salary Commission, General Assembly Compensation Commission, and Judicial Compensation Commission recommendations. Legislative action must be taken within 50 days after introduction of the joint resolutions of the Governor’s Salary Commission and the Judicial Compensation Commission.
- **January 31**  
  Governor delivers the State of the State Address (noon)

**February 5**  
**27th Day — SENATE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE**

- Senate bills introduced after this date referred to the Senate Rules Committee
- **February 8**  
  8th Day before House Bill Introduction 00:00 PM, “Hocner” will close at 5:00 PM
- **February 9**  
  9th Day — **HOUSE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE**
  House bills introduced after this date referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee
- **February 18**  
  18th Day — “Green Bag” appointments submitted by Governor (Delivered on Friday, February 16)

**March 5**  
**33rd Day — Final date for introduction of bills without suspension of Rules**

- **March 13**  
  13th Day — Committee Reporting Courtesies Date: Each Chamber’s committees to report their own bills by this date
- **March 19**  
  19th Day — Opposite Chamber Bill Crossover Date: Each Chamber to send to other Chamber those bills it intends to pass favorably.
- Opposite Chamber bills received after this date subject to referral to Rules Committee (Senate Rule 32(c), House Courtesy Date)

**April 7**  
**88th Day — Budget bills to be passed by both Chambers**

**April 9**  
**90th Day — ADJOURNMENT “SINE DIE” (Monday)**
Lessons Learned

- anyone can advocate
- the General Assembly website is comprehensive
- engage elected officials early (ie. before session)
- anticipate arguments from the opposition
- policy change often takes more than one session
Acknowledgments

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