

**House Bill No. 1125**

AN ACT concerning

**Black Bears – Damage to Crops and Livestock – Compensation**

FOR the purpose of establishing a Black Bear Conservation Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund in the Department of Natural Resources; providing that the source of funds shall be from the sale of bear conservation stamps or decals and certain gifts or contributions to the State; providing that annual contributions to the Fund shall be used to reimburse farmers for certain damage to certain agricultural products ~~and that at the end of a year, any remaining funds shall be transferred in a certain manner for purposes of black bear research~~; providing certain limits and conditions on the uses of the Fund; requiring the Department to adopt certain regulations; and generally relating to the establishment and administration of a special fund for the purpose of providing certain reimbursement for crop and livestock damage caused by black bears.

BY adding to

Article – Natural Resources

Section 10-423.1

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1990 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

**Preamble**

~~WHEREAS, There have been instances beginning in 1987 through 1995 where black bears were proven to have damaged crops or livestock in Maryland; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The Department of Natural Resources has existing programs for other wildlife species that damage crops under which a farmer can obtain a permit at no cost for removing the animal if the farmer can justify to the Department that animals have damaged the farmer's crops; and~~

~~WHEREAS, It is the purpose of this Act to set up a system to reimburse farmers for damage to their crops or livestock caused by black bears; and~~

~~WHEREAS, It is also the intent of this Act that, when the Department of Natural Resources determines that the black bear carrying capacity has been reached, the Department shall implement all the recommendations of the Black Bear Task Force presented in September 1995; now, therefore,~~

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Natural Resources**