

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2002 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Chapter 552 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2000  
Section 4 and 5

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Chapter 534 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2002  
Section 2

Preamble

WHEREAS, Many rural communities in Maryland are currently facing difficult challenges relating to changing economic condition, an aging population, an inadequate access to quality health care and other services, and a deteriorating or inadequate physical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, Local governments, educational institutions, and private service providers in rural areas are increasingly unable to meet all the economic development, community development, and human services needs of approximately 1.4 million citizens residing in the rural counties and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Agricultural and other resource-based enterprises continue to underpin the local economies of rural communities, but are increasingly under threat from national and international competition, land development pressure, and regulatory influences; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress passed The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 which potentially provides Marylanders with opportunities to seek assistance on a variety of rural concerns including agricultural and forest land preservation, soil and water conservation, agribusiness development, small community water and wastewater infrastructure, safe and affordable housing, broadband telecommunications access, and other community facilities; and

WHEREAS, The State's existing rural capacity development programs could be combined to provide for more efficient programmatic and policy development coordination, take better advantage of new opportunities, and enhance the capabilities of Maryland's rural communities to deal with the difficult challenges they face; now, therefore,

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

**Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Departments**

Title 15. [Form for] Rural Maryland COUNCIL.

15-101.

IN THIS TITLE, "COUNCIL" MEANS THE RURAL MARYLAND COUNCIL.