

HOUSE BILL 561

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By: **St. Mary's County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2025

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **St. Mary's County – Public Facilities Bond**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing and empowering the County Commissioners of St. Mary's
4 County, from time to time, to borrow not more than \$71,000,000 in order to finance
5 the construction, improvement, or development of certain public facilities in St.
6 Mary's County, as herein defined, and to effect such borrowing by the issuance and
7 sale at public or private sale of its general obligation bonds in like par amount;
8 empowering the County to fix and determine, by resolution, the form, tenor, interest
9 rate or rates or method of determining the same, terms, conditions, maturities, and
10 all other details incident to the issuance and sale of the bonds; empowering the
11 County to issue refunding bonds for the purchase or redemption of bonds in advance
12 of maturity; empowering and directing the County to levy, impose, and collect,
13 annually, ad valorem taxes in rate and amount sufficient to provide funds for the
14 payment of the maturing principal of and interest on the bonds; exempting the bonds
15 and refunding bonds and the interest thereon and any income derived therefrom
16 from all State, county, municipal, and other taxation in the State of Maryland;
17 providing that nothing in this Act shall prevent the County from authorizing the
18 issuance and sale of bonds the interest on which is not excludable from gross income
19 for federal income tax purposes; and generally relating to the issuance and sale of
20 such bonds.

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
22 That, as used herein, the term "County" means the body politic and corporate of the State
23 of Maryland known as the County Commissioners of St. Mary's County, and the term
24 "construction, improvement, or development of public facilities" means the acquisition,
25 alteration, construction, reconstruction, enlargement, equipping, expansion, extension,
26 improvement, rehabilitation, renovation, upgrading, and repair of public buildings and
27 facilities and public works projects, including, but not limited to, public works projects such
28 as highways, roads, bridges and storm drains, public school buildings and facilities, boating
29 facilities, shore erosion and other marine property, landfills, and recycling facilities, public
30 operational buildings and facilities such as buildings and facilities for County

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 administrative use, capital improvements to the Wicomico Shores Taxing District, County
2 athletic facilities, the community college, community swimming pools, public safety, health
3 and social services, libraries, commuter air service facilities, refuse disposal buildings and
4 facilities, and parks and recreation buildings and facilities, together with the costs of
5 acquiring land or interests in land as well as any related architectural, financial, legal,
6 planning, or engineering services.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the County is hereby
8 authorized to finance any part or all of the costs of the public facilities described in Section
9 1 of this Act, and to borrow money and incur indebtedness for that purpose, at one time or
10 from time to time, in an amount not exceeding, in the aggregate, \$71,000,000, and to
11 evidence such borrowing by the issuance and sale upon its full faith and credit of general
12 obligation bonds in like par amount, which may be issued at one time or from time to time,
13 in one or more groups or series, as the County may determine.

14 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the bonds shall be issued in
15 accordance with a resolution of the County, which shall describe generally the construction,
16 improvement, or development of public facilities for which the proceeds of the bond sale are
17 intended and the amount needed for those purposes. The County shall have and is hereby
18 granted full and complete authority and discretion in the resolution to fix and determine
19 with respect to the bonds of any issue: the designation, date of issue, denomination or
20 denominations, form or forms, and tenor of the bonds which, without limitation, may be
21 issued in registered form within the meaning of § 19–204 of the Local Government Article
22 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended; the rate or rates of interest payable
23 thereon, or the method of determining the same, which may include a variable rate; the
24 date or dates and amount or amounts of maturity, which need not be in equal par amounts
25 or in consecutive annual installments, provided only that no bond of any issue shall mature
26 later than 30 years from the date of its issue; the manner of selling the bonds, which may
27 be at either public or private sale, for such price or prices as may be determined to be in
28 the best interests of St. Mary's County; the manner of executing and sealing the bonds,
29 which may be by facsimile; the terms and conditions, if any, under which bonds may be
30 tendered for payment or purchase prior to their stated maturity; the terms or conditions, if
31 any, under which bonds may or shall be redeemed prior to their stated maturity; the place
32 or places of payment of the principal of and the interest on the bonds, which may be at any
33 bank or trust company within or without the State of Maryland; covenants relating to
34 compliance with applicable requirements of federal income tax law, including (without
35 limitation) covenants regarding the payment of rebate or penalties in lieu of rebate;
36 covenants relating to compliance with applicable requirements of federal or state securities
37 laws; and generally all matters incident to the terms, conditions, issuance, sale, and
38 delivery thereof.

39 The bonds may be made redeemable before maturity, at the option of the County, at
40 such price or prices and under such terms and conditions as may be fixed by the County
41 prior to the issuance of the bonds, either in the resolution or in a bond order pursuant to
42 the bond resolution. The bonds may be issued in registered form and provision may be made
43 for the registration of the principal only. In case any officer whose signature appears on
44 any bond ceases to be such officer before the delivery thereof, such signature shall

1 nevertheless be valid and sufficient for all purposes as if he had remained in office until
2 such delivery. The bonds and the issuance and sale thereof shall be exempt from the
3 provisions of §§ 19–205 and 19–206 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code
4 of Maryland, as amended.

5 The County may enter into agreements with agents, banks, fiduciaries, insurers, or
6 others for the purpose of enhancing the marketability of any security for the bonds and for
7 the purpose of securing any tender option that may be granted to holders of the bonds, all
8 as may be determined and presented in the aforesaid resolution, which may (but need not)
9 state as security for the performance by the County of any monetary obligations under such
10 agreements the same security given by the County to bondholders for the performance by
11 the County of its monetary obligations under the bonds.

12 If the County determines in the resolution to offer any of the bonds by solicitation of
13 competitive bids at public sale, the resolution shall fix the terms and conditions of the public
14 sale and shall adopt a form of notice of sale, which shall outline the terms and conditions,
15 and a form of advertisement, which shall be published in one or more daily or weekly
16 newspapers having a general circulation in the County and which may also be published in
17 one or more journals having a circulation primarily among banks and investment bankers.
18 At least one publication of the advertisement shall be made not less than 10 days before
19 the sale of the bonds.

20 Upon delivery of any bonds to the purchaser or purchasers, payment therefor shall
21 be made to the Treasurer of St. Mary's County or such other official of St. Mary's County
22 as may be designated to receive such payment in a resolution passed by the County before
23 such delivery.

24 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the net proceeds of the sale
25 of bonds shall be used and applied exclusively and solely for the acquisition, construction,
26 improvement, or development of public facilities for which the bonds are sold. If the
27 amounts borrowed shall prove inadequate to finance the projects described in the
28 resolution, the County may issue additional bonds with the limitations hereof for the
29 purpose of evidencing the borrowing of additional funds for such financing, provided the
30 resolution authorizing the sale of additional bonds shall so recite, but if the net proceeds of
31 the sale of any issue of bonds exceed the amount needed to finance the projects described
32 in the resolution, the excess funds so borrowed and not expended shall be applied to the
33 payment of the next principal maturity of the bonds or to the redemption of any part of the
34 bonds which have been made redeemable or to the purchase and cancellation of bonds,
35 unless the County shall adopt a resolution allocating the excess funds to the acquisition,
36 construction, improvement, or development of other public facilities, as defined and within
37 the limits set forth in this Act.

38 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the bonds hereby authorized
39 shall constitute, and they shall so recite, an irrevocable pledge of the full faith and credit
40 and unlimited taxing power of the County to the payment of the maturing principal of and
41 interest on the bonds as and when they become payable. In each and every fiscal year that
42 any of the bonds are outstanding, the County shall levy or cause to be levied ad valorem

1 taxes upon all the assessable property within the corporate limits of the County in rate and
2 amount sufficient to provide for or assure the payment, when due, of the principal of and
3 interest on all the bonds maturing in each such fiscal year and, in the event the proceeds
4 from the taxes so levied in any such fiscal year shall prove inadequate for such payment,
5 additional taxes shall be levied in the succeeding fiscal year to make up any such deficiency.
6 The County may apply to the payment of the principal of and interest on any bonds issued
7 hereunder any funds received by it from the State of Maryland, the United States of
8 America, any agency or instrumentality thereof, or from any other source, if such funds are
9 granted for the purpose of assisting the County in financing the acquisition, construction,
10 improvement, or development of the public facilities defined in this Act and, to the extent
11 of any such funds received or receivable in any fiscal year, the taxes that are required to be
12 levied under this Act may be reduced accordingly.

13 SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the County is further
14 authorized and empowered, at any time and from time to time, to issue its bonds in the
15 manner hereinabove described for the purpose of refunding, by payment at maturity or
16 upon purchase or redemption, any bonds issued hereunder. The validity of any such
17 refunding bonds shall in no way be dependent upon or related to the validity or invalidity
18 of the obligations so refunded. The powers herein granted with respect to the issuance of
19 bonds shall be applicable to the issuance of refunding bonds. Such refunding bonds may be
20 issued by the County in such an amount as shall be necessary for the purpose of providing
21 it with funds to pay any of its outstanding bonds issued hereunder at maturity, for the
22 purpose of providing it with funds to purchase in the open market any of its outstanding
23 bonds issued hereunder, prior to the maturity thereof, or for the purpose of providing it
24 with funds for the redemption prior to maturity of any outstanding bonds issued hereunder
25 which are, by their terms, redeemable, for the purpose of providing it with funds to pay
26 interest on any outstanding bonds issued hereunder prior to their payment at maturity of
27 purchase or redemption in advance of maturity, or for the purpose of providing it with funds
28 to pay any redemption or purchase premium in connection with the refunding of any of its
29 outstanding bonds issued hereunder. The proceeds of the sale of any such refunding bonds
30 shall be segregated and set apart by the County as a separate trust fund to be used solely
31 for the purpose of paying the purchase or redemption prices of the bonds to be refunded.

32 SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the County may, prior to the
33 preparation of definitive bonds, issue interim certificates or temporary bonds, exchangeable
34 for definitive bonds when such bonds have been executed and are available for such
35 delivery, provided, however, that any such interim certificates or temporary bonds shall be
36 issued in all respects subject to the restrictions and requirements set forth in this Act. The
37 County may, by appropriate resolution, provide for the replacement of any bonds issued
38 hereunder which shall have become mutilated or lost or destroyed upon such conditions
39 and after receiving such indemnity as the County may require.

40 SECTION 8. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That any and all obligations issued
41 pursuant to the authority of this Act, their transfer, the interest payable thereon, and any
42 income derived therefrom in the hands of the holders thereof from time to time (including
43 any profit made in the sale thereof) shall be and are hereby declared to be at all times
44 exempt from State, county, municipal, or other taxation of every kind and nature

1 whatsoever within the State of Maryland. Nothing in this Act shall prevent the County
2 from authorizing the issuance and sale of bonds the interest on which is not excludable
3 from gross income for federal income tax purposes.

4 SECTION 9. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the authority to borrow
5 money and issue bonds conferred on the County by this Act shall be deemed to provide an
6 additional and alternative authority for borrowing money and shall be regarded as
7 supplemental and additional to powers conferred upon the County by other laws and shall
8 not be regarded as in derogation of any power now existing; and all Acts of the General
9 Assembly of Maryland heretofore passed authorizing the County to borrow money are
10 hereby continued to the extent that the powers contained in such Acts have not been
11 exercised, and nothing contained in this Act may be construed to impair, in any way, the
12 validity of any bonds that may have been issued by the County under the authority of any
13 said Acts, and the validity of the bonds is hereby ratified, confirmed, and approved. This
14 Act, being necessary for the welfare of the inhabitants of St. Mary's County, shall be
15 liberally construed to effect the purposes hereof. All Acts and parts of Acts inconsistent
16 with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

17 SECTION 10. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
18 June 1, 2025.