



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary
Charles Glass, Deputy Secretary

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support – House Bill 1131 - Natural Resources – Limited Fishing Guide License – Propulsion of Boats and Vessels

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Nature Resources offers its full support for House Bill 1131. This bill will allow limited fishing guides to use any type of vessel that is human-powered to guide clients.

House Bill 1131 would greatly expand the types of vessels a limited fishing guide is allowed to use to guide clients, including those made for individuals with disabilities. Currently only vessels powered by oars or paddles are allowed. At the time of the law's initial passage this license was intended to be used by guides guiding clients out of kayaks or canoes. Since then, kayak companies have introduced additional drive systems that are still moved by human power, but not with an oar or a paddle. These are typically powered by pedals that are moved by the user's legs that drive either a propeller or a paddle-type drive. This bill will allow these guides to take advantage of new technologies while maintaining the intent of the statute to require vessels under the guidance of a limited fishing guide to be powered by human power.

Guides with a limited fishing guide license will be able to offer trips with updated vessels using new technologies. It is uncertain how many guides will take advantage of this new ability, or how many new clients they will be able to obtain by offering vessels with new technologies.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources respectfully requests a favorable committee report for House Bill 1131.

Respectfully submitted,
James W. McKitrick
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services

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