

SENATE BILL 142 – SUPPORT

26 February 2020

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

As a Marylander residing in Prince Georges County and a Service-disabled combat Veteran, I want to offer my **strong support** for Senator Simonaire's **Senate Bill 142, the Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund**.

In addition to renaming the Recreational License Donation Fund to the Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund, this bill also allows the fund to provide grants to nonprofit organizations that provide recreational therapy opportunities to Gold Star families, disabled Veterans, disabled members of the armed forces of the United States, or permanently disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair.

This program would greatly support the work of a variety of Maryland nonprofits including Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (La Plata), the Salute Military Golf Association (Silver Spring), TALMAR (Baltimore), Maryland Therapeutic Riding (Crownsville), and Team River Runner (Rockville).

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs notes that recreational therapy program outcomes include improved physical health and capability to accomplish daily life activities, as well as improved mental health and relationships with others.

These recreational therapy programs are positive factors in enhancing participants' behavioral health and **directly contribute to suicide prevention efforts**.

As a disabled combat Veteran, I know from personal experience the lifesaving impacts these programs have on our Veterans, Service members, and their Families!

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 142.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BTS', written over a horizontal line.

Brian T. Smith