

Testimony before the  
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 1, 2022

Senate Bill 713  
Position: **OPPOSE**

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

I, Emily Pietrowski, am a high school student in Anne Arundel County and a resident of district 33. I respectfully request an unfavorable report on the Senate Bill 713 from the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Currently, in Anne Arundel County there is a hook and line fishing gear regulation. This regulation protects the finfish in the Chesapeake Bay by not disturbing the underwater habitat and reducing bycatch. SB 713 allows for commercial bowfishing and the use of nets. It also does not specify the meaning of “certain fishing restrictions applicable in certain Anne Arundel County waters apply only to commercial finfish harvesters” which opens the question of what, if any at all, recreational fishing regulations remain in Anne Arundel County.

As a resident of Anne Arundel County, I worry about the safety in waters for people and the impact of fish populations in the Chesapeake Bay that would come from SB 713. Anne Arundel County is a populated area where bowfishing could cause harm to a person, pet, or property. The area that surrounds the water that would be open for bowfishing would pass by homes, schools, and parks. COMAR 08.02.25.05 does restrict a person from shooting archery equipment from any human being, private or public swimming area, international diving flag, occupied duck blind, or another vessel if it does not have another individual using archery equipment. This does not include parks, homes, or schools. As for the impact of fish populations due to SB 713, archery equipment is only restricted on some finfish including shark species, muskellunge and muskellunge hybrids, Northern pike, striped bass hybrids, walleye, and species listed as threatened or endangered under COMAR 08.03.08. This allows all other finfish to be commercially harvested with no other listed regulations.

Additionally, SB 713 is not an accessible bill to the public. It is confusing to the average person due to its wording and lack of explanation on the effects to recreational fishing.

For these reasons, I respectfully recommend an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 713 from the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Sincerely,  
Emily Pietrowski