



## Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1228 – Natural Resources – Oysters – Spat, Shells, and Substrate

March 4, 2022

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB1228** on behalf of ShoreRivers. ShoreRivers is a river protection group on Maryland's Eastern Shore with over 2,000 members. Our mission is to protect and restore our Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration, and education.

We support this bill because it authorizes a number of activities that will make measurable progress towards increasing Maryland's production of oysters. Specifically, this bill includes the use of a creative and sustainable model to incentivize the incorporation of new shucking houses in the state of Maryland, creates an oyster shell recycling grant, increases the states investment in spat production, and will conduct a much-needed bay bottom survey.

The bay bottom survey is critical as it will update the 50 year-old survey that scientists and fishery managers currently use to make oyster management decision. This bill places emphasis on the need to conduct that survey in Eastern Bay, which is a recommendation made by the Oyster Advisory Committee – a committee that incorporates input from working watermen, scientists, and environmental organizations. ShoreRivers feels that investing in Eastern Bay is critical considering the amount of restoration opportunity the vast and open areas of Eastern Bay has to offer. Investment in Eastern Bay is an investment in the entire mid-shore region in terms of oyster growth, oyster reproduction and the many ecosystem benefits a healthy oyster reef provides. By understanding where the restoration potential exists in Eastern Bay the state can more efficiently invest in what should be the next big oyster restoration project in Maryland.

For these reasons stated above, ShoreRivers urges the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB1228**.

Sincerely,

**Matt Pluta**  
Choptank Riverkeeper, on behalf of:

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### ***ShoreRivers***

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director  
Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper  
Elle Bassett, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

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**Main Office**  
114 S. Washington St.  
Suite 301  
Easton, MD 21601  
443.385.0511

**Regional Office**  
111A North Main St.  
Galena, MD 21635  
410.810.7556

[shorerivers.org](http://shorerivers.org)

**Regional Office**  
207 S. Water St.  
Unit B  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
410.810.7556