

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0473 – Environment – Ambient Air Monitoring – Particulate and Fine
Particulate Matter

Dear Chairman C.T. Wilson and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

The Protectors of the St Martin River supports the Environment – Ambient Air Monitoring – Particulate and Fine Particulate Matter, with amendment to advance the date by which the Department shall deploy ambient air monitors from January 1, 2026 to January 1, 2024. Air monitors are readily available equipment, which with adequate funding could quickly be deployed, there is no reason to delay this effort for years.

The coastal bays of the Eastern Shore of Maryland have degraded water quality caused by excess nutrients due in part to unregulated ammonia discharge from Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) which is exhausted by large fans from the chicken houses and deposited on the surrounding waters and land. There are thousands of chicken houses growing millions of chickens on a year round basis throughout the Eastern Shore of Maryland which are depositing tons of ammonia in the region.

Our organization has undertaken numerous efforts to restore healthy waterways in the coastal bays of Maryland, through education of residents in critical areas as to environmentally sensitive land management and through an oyster gardening program to reduce excess nutrients in the coastal bays. This bill will provide a significant contribution to the health and well-being of the coastal bays of Maryland.

Respectfully,

Joseph Jankowski, Director
Protectors of the St Martin River