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**Testimony encouraging a FAVORABLE report on Senate Bill 73 – Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program – Renaming**  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB73**.

In 2010, I had the privilege of joining the very first cohort of the Chesapeake Conservation Corps. I graduated in December 2007, the same month that the Great Recession began. Between the very limited job market and conservation positions all seeming to want relevant work experience, the idea of finding work in the conservation field seemed near impossible. Then one day in 2010, I came across a posting for this new program called the Chesapeake Conservation Corps that was willing to give recent graduates real world job experience. I quickly applied and was of course thrilled when I got a call offering me a position with a small watershed organization called the South River Federation, now the Arundel Rivers Federation. Of course I said yes!

Through this program, I had the opportunity to learn about Chesapeake Bay conservation and restoration through hands on work. Over the past 15 years, I've gone from an intern to serving as the Director of Restoration where I am able to continue working with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to implement millions of dollars of restoration serving communities throughout our watersheds. During this time, I've been able to see other year-one members go on to become project implementation officers with DNR and even the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Over the past 15 years, I have seen what an incredible impact this program can have on expanding the capacity of a small watershed organization. Our Corps members have led unique research projects helping us better understand our waterways, lead scuba diving surveys of oyster reefs, and worked with local partners to implement small-scale restoration projects. Once completing the program, our Corps members have gone on to serve through the Peace Corps, obtain masters degrees in the field of conservation, and become water resource engineers. We haven't just benefited from hosting. Our current Riverkeeper who recently brought SAV restoration to the Western Shore and our Outreach Coordinator who led summer camps this past year reaching well over 1,000 youth both started their careers as Corps members with one of our partners, Shore Rivers.

Arundel Rivers Federation applauds the Department for bringing forward this bill and we enthusiastically encourage and support the renaming of this program. As such, we respectfully request a **FAVORABLE REPORT on SB73**.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Carr  
Director of Restoration  
Arundel Rivers Federation