

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on SB 168 during this hearing. My name is Nathan Gremba, and I am a resident of the Rock Creek community in Northern Anne Arundel County.

As someone who deeply cares about my local environment, where I live, and the wellbeing of the surrounding waterways, I am concerned about the potential risks posed by the dredging activities in the Patapsco River. This issue is particularly personal to me, as my community is directly impacted by the health of the Patapsco ecosystem. The Maryland Port Administration Bay Enhancement Working Group CAD Subcommittee has raised several key concerns, including:

- The fragile state of the Patapsco ecosystem and its food chain.
- Potential contamination and sediment disturbance near residential waterways, leading to increased turbidity that affects water-based activities like swimming, boating, and other recreational sports.
- The risk to fishing, crabbing, and the safety of consuming seafood caught in the Patapsco.
- Hypoxia (low oxygen levels) in the waterways, especially in Rock Creek, which already struggles with chronic hypoxia.
- The threat of fresh groundwater aquifer contamination, which supplies wells in Pasadena, from deep dredging.
- Damage to benthic life (such as clams, oysters, and worms) and submerged aquatic vegetation.
- Negative effects on waterfowl and predatory birds that rely on fish from the Patapsco for food.
- Concerns about declining property values, local businesses, and livelihoods due to the potential impacts on waterways.
- Noise pollution from around-the-clock dredging operations, located less than a mile offshore.

A 4-year moratorium on the creation of Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Cells in Maryland is crucial. It will give the Maryland Port Administration the time to conduct comprehensive research, develop mitigation strategies, and engage with citizens, legislators, and the community before implementing any CAD operations in the Patapsco, scheduled for June 2029.

For these reasons, I strongly support SB 168 and urge the Committee to give it a favorable report, moving it forward to the House floor for a vote.

Sincerely,
Nathan Gremba
Rock Creek
Pasadena, MD