

**Senate Bill 168 – SUPPORT**  
**Senate Bill 168 – Environment**  
**Crossover to House Committee on the Environment and Transportation**  
**“Confined Aquatic Disposal Cells - Construction - Moratorium”**

**Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,**

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony on SB 168 during this hearing. My name is Zachary Sandonato, and I reside in the community of Bar Harbor in Northern Anne Arundel County. As a civil engineer, I am particularly concerned with the potential long-term environmental and structural implications of current dredging practices in our local waterways. Additionally, as a waterfront landowner and a parent to a toddler, this issue is deeply personal to me. I want my child to grow up in an environment where they can safely swim, explore, and enjoy our beautiful waters, just as I have. The current state of our waterways, and the proposed solutions, directly impact not only my family's future but also the well-being of our entire community.

As a civil engineer with 9 years of experience, I understand the technical and ecological risks associated with Confined Aquatic Disposal cells (CADs). CADs pose a particular concern because they often involve depositing contaminated dredged material back into our waterways without properly assessing the long-term consequences. These practices risk further polluting our waters and harm aquatic life, which is unacceptable, especially when there are cleaner and more responsible alternatives. It is vital that CADs be carefully assessed for their potential risks, not just on a case-by-case basis, but in the context of the cumulative impacts from ongoing pollution in our region.

In Northern Anne Arundel County, and especially near my home, we are already burdened with significant pollution from various sources. The Brandon Shores coal power plant, the Wagner fossil fuel power plant, the Curtis Bay Medical Waste Incinerator, nearby sewage treatment plants, oil refineries, and chemical plants all contribute to the contamination of our air, water, and soil. The MPA Dredge Cox Creek Containment Facility, the toxic legacy of Bethlehem Steel, the CSX coal pile, and the numerous nearby toxic landfills only add to the strain on our environment. The cumulative effects of these pollution sources are already damaging the health of our local ecosystem, and adding new, potentially harmful practices like unregulated CAD construction would be irresponsible and dangerous.

As a parent, I am especially concerned about how all these pollution sources, when combined, affect my child's future. The health risks posed by continued contamination, whether it's from air pollution, heavy metals in the water, or hazardous waste leaching into our local environments, are not risks I am willing to accept for the sake of convenience or short-term economic gain. My family, and all families in this region, deserve to have access to clean, safe, and healthy water for swimming, recreation, and simply enjoying the natural beauty around us. Allowing CAD cells to proliferate without proper safeguards only adds to the cumulative environmental burden we are already carrying, and it risks exacerbating the pollution levels that are already too high.

We must take a more responsible approach to how we handle dredged material, ensuring that contaminated materials are dealt with in a manner that doesn't further pollute our waters, air, or soil. The proposed moratorium on new CADs is an essential step in the right direction. By halting the construction of these cells and thoroughly assessing the risks they pose, we can ensure that the future of our waterways is not compromised by further degradation.

I strongly support Senate Bill 168 and urge the committee to pass this moratorium. We must prioritize the long-term health and sustainability of our environment over short-term fixes that could have devastating consequences. We owe it to future generations, including our children, to protect the water that sustains us all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Zachary Sandonato  
Bar Harbor Community, Northern Anne Arundel County