

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 this opportunity to provide written testimony on SB 168 in this hearing. My name is Matthew B. Laurens. I live in the community of Stoney Beach in Northern Anne Arundel County.

I am a licensed pediatrician and own a condo that faces the water where Stoney Creek joins the Patapsco. Our family enjoys kayaking around the area, as well as swimming and fishing. This is a treasured getaway for us from the busy workday in Baltimore City. Preserving the health of the waterways in the area is highly important to our family and consistent with our values to maintain and support the natural environment and associated aquatic life. We fully support preservation efforts so that others can also enjoy the area.

I have recently been alarmed by the concerns raised by citizens and the committee in the MD Port Administration Bay Enhancement Working Group CAD Subcommittee, including:

- Risk to the fragile Patapsco ecosystem and food chain.
- Risk of dredging contaminated sediment near residential waterways and creation of turbidity in the water to in-water activities like swimming, boating, and watersports.
- Risk of contamination and turbidity to fishing and crabbing and ingestion of Patapsco caught seafood.
- Risk of hypoxia (low oxygen) in the waterways created by turbidity and nutrients released in CAD dredging – especially in Rock Creek which has chronic hypoxia.
- Risk of infiltration of the fresh ground water aquifer under the Patapsco that supplies wells in Pasadena from deep dredging.
- Risk to benthic life (clams, oysters, worms) and submerged aquatic vegetation.
- Risk to waterfowl and prey birds that feed on fish in the Patapsco.
- Risk of impacts to waterway home values, businesses, and livelihoods.
- Risk of noise during 24/7 dredging operations less than a mile offshore.
- Other risks of likely site selection less than a mile off Stoney Creek and Rock Creek to nearby waterway residential communities.
- Noting overburden of communities to other existing nearby sources of pollution.

The 4-year moratorium on the creation of Confined Aquatic Disposal Cells in MD will ensure that the MD Port Administration conducts the necessary research and creates mitigation plans to address the risks and allows more time for citizen, legislator, and community engagement before CAD would begin to be deployed in the Patapsco in June 2029.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB 168 and ask the Committee to give it a favorable report and move it to the House floor for a vote.

Sincerely,



Matthew B. Laurens

Stoney Beach Community, Anne Arundel County, Maryland