



The Greater Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF THE GREATER OCEAN CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In support of:

HB13 - Solid Waste Management - Prohibition on Releasing a Balloon Into the Atmosphere

The Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce represents over 900 businesses and organizations in the region. On behalf of those businesses, I am writing to express our SUPPORT of House Bill 13 **Solid Waste Management - Prohibition on Releasing a Balloon Into the Atmosphere**. This bill would prohibit a person from knowingly and intentionally releasing or causing to be released, or organizing the release of, a certain balloon into the atmosphere; requiring the Department of the Environment to enforce this Act; and enact a civil penalty for violation of this Act

Mass releases for celebration, commemoration or for marketing purposes may not be ill intended but these balloons will ultimately come back to earth in mass and cause great harm to wildlife.

Given our proximity to sensitive environments and animal species here along the coast, the Chamber also feels businesses should help protect our whole community by practicing responsible marketing. While this bill aims to halt actual releases, balloons used for marketing and as an eye-catching visual do escape, potentially causing the same damage to wildlife a mass release would.

While our unique location in the state affords us the unfortunate opportunity to witness birds, fish, turtles, Assateague ponies and seals perish because they are or became entangled in a balloon and it's string, animals everywhere in Maryland face this potential harm. Maryland prides itself on its unique environments and wildlife whether it's agriculture based or wild, aquatic or terrestrial. Passage of SB28, will aid in protecting both.

For the aforementioned reasons, the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests your support for SB 028.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the position of the Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce at 410-213-0144 ext 102.

Sincerely, Melanie Pursel, President & CEO

Eunice Q. Sorin Visitor & Conference Center

12320 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, Maryland 21842 • 410-213-0144 • Fax 410-213-7521

www.oceancity.org • info@oceancity.org