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VIA HAND DELIVERY

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **HOUSE BILL 517 – MITA – UNFAVORABLE**

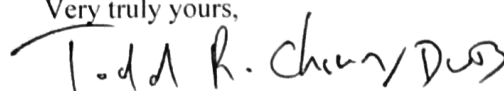
Dear Chairman Barve:

This letter is written on behalf of the Maryland Industrial Technology Alliance (“MITA”), a non-profit trade association representing more than 20 industrial, manufacturing and supporting businesses **opposing House Bill 517**, which would amend the Maryland Constitution to create environmental rights and allow the State and local governments to enforce those rights through litigation. MITA opposes this legislation for the following reasons:

- **Unnecessary:** The State and federal government have implemented a robust suite of laws to protect the public from environmental risks, ranging from air emissions to chemicals, and under current statute the Attorney General, local governments, and individuals have authority to ensure those laws are enforced. There is no need to create a separate and amorphous set of environmental rights when these regulatory systems are in place to provide well targeted protections against environmental harm.
- **Substantially increases litigation risk:** HB 517 allows the State and any political subdivision thereof to enforce “environmental rights.” These rights include everything from “ecosystems that sustain the State’s natural resources” to preserving the “natural, healthful, scenic, and historic values of the environment.” These rights are broad, highly subjective, and unconstrained, creating virtually unlimited risk of litigation for both businesses and hardworking families. Even those who successfully defend against such actions would be forced to foot substantial legal costs, creating an unacceptable risk for anyone doing anything in the State.

For these reasons, MITA respectfully requests that you give House Bill 517 an **Unfavorable Report.**

Very truly yours,


Todd R. Chason

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee Members