



7338 Baltimore Ave Suite 102
College Park, MD 20740

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Testimony on: SJ6 - “Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – Atlantic Menhaden – Population Evaluation and Prohibition on Commercial Reduction Fishing”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 10, 2021

The Maryland Sierra Club urges a favorable report on SJ6, a resolution which asks the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to exercise its authority regarding the management of the menhaden fishery to consider prohibiting commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake Bay.

Atlantic menhaden are a keystone species for the Chesapeake Bay. As noted by this resolution, Atlantic menhaden form a critical connection between the bottom and the top of the food chain. They eat plankton and rotifers as filter feeders, and are a rich food source for many predators, including rockfish, osprey, and bald eagles. As filter feeders, they help clear nutrient-polluted Bay waters. However, the number of menhaden juveniles have decreased significantly since 1976, from over 16 million average catch per haul to less than 2 million per haul.¹

In order to protect the natural wonders of the Chesapeake Bay, it is important that action be taken now. We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.

Marc Imlay
Endangered Species Coordinator
Natural Places Committee
marc.imlay@mdsierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
josh.tulkin@mdsierra.org

¹ Durrell, E. Q. & Weedon, C. (2019). Striped Bass Seine Survey Juvenile Index Web Page. DNR.Maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/Juvenile-Index.ASPX. Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Service.

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.