



## Testimony in SUPPORT of HB507- Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021

February 8, 2021

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB507** - *The Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021* - on behalf of ShoreRivers. ShoreRivers is a river protection group on Maryland's Eastern Shore with 3,500 members. Our mission is to protect and restore our Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration and education. ShoreRivers believes that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our staff, board, supporters, and programs is critical to achieving our mission of clean water.

A key strategy in our efforts towards cleaner rivers on the Eastern Shore is collaboration with farmers to install and maintain as many best management practices as possible - 111 agriculture BMP projects to date. These BMPs are also paramount in achieving the Eastern Shore's share (1/3) of nitrogen reductions required by the State under the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). **The establishment of the Clean Water Commerce Fund in HB507 will secure \$20 million for important Chesapeake restoration efforts with a 35% set aside for agriculture- providing financial aid to critical, cost effective initiatives.** Between 2015-2020, ShoreRivers total ag-project cost was \$12.4 million with a return in nitrogen reductions equaling 109,193 pounds per year, totaling \$113 per pound of nitrogen. This is incredibly cost effective compared to the estimated \$1000+ per pound found in urban stormwater retrofits.

ShoreRivers is also energized to endorse the CWCF's **20% set aside for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) initiatives- which protects funding for communities that disproportionately experience the negative effects of pollution, runoff, and outdated stormwater management solutions.** These efforts align with our organization's values, and help to engage and reinforce many communities as the effects of Climate Change progress and intensify.

The Clean Water Commerce Act allows municipalities, farmers, and advocacy organizations to continue making advances in pollution reductions, further aids communities that are disproportionately burdened by environmental harm, and helps to bolster the resiliency of rural Eastern Shore communities in the face of Climate Change. For these reasons stated above, ShoreRivers urges the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB507**.

Sincerely,

**Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper** on behalf of:

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### ShoreRivers

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director

Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper  
Elle Bassett, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

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