

TESTIMONY FOR HB 82

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Fisher

Committee: House Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Sam Harvey

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB 82 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive Movement.

Caucus members consistently support legislation that speaks to human rights, and no rights can be more basic and universal than those that deal with our enjoyment of clean air, water, and soil. All other rights pale into meaninglessness, if we enjoy them in an environment that is poisoning us by our every breath, that is withering the livestock of the fields and forests, streams and seas, that is robbing us of our ability to grow healthy food.

We should all be able to further agree, that every human being should by right enjoy protection from the degradation of our climate by industry's refusal to acknowledge its role in stewardship. Every individual must bear a measure of responsibility for this failure as well, but it is the very lack of the enshrinement of these rights that have hidden the path toward stewardship from us. What value is there on the Earth, that does not derive from the Earth herself? She has always bestowed her gifts upon us, but to our increasing peril we continue to repay her blessings with an arrogant disregard. For all our wisdom and scientific advancement, we seem to have forgotten that we still cannot create soil in the lab, nor seeds from thin air.

HB 82 reminds us that every person should have the right to intervene, toward the protection of these sacred rights – indeed, it should be our duty to do so. We should support this legislation, for our own sake, but more to the point for the sake of future generations. If we do not again take up our responsibilities as stewards of the Earth, our heritage may well be a dirty, ugly, poisoned, and increasingly unstable planet.

The Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.