



Testimony offered on behalf of:
THE GARRETT COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FAVORABLE:

SB 450 – State Lakes Protection and Restoration Fund - Purpose, Use, and Funding - Sunset Extension

**Education, Health and Environment Affairs Committee
February 10, 2021**

On behalf of the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, representing 600 member organizations in Western Maryland, I write to express our support of **SB 450 – State Lakes Protection and Restoration Fund - Purpose, Use, and Funding - Sunset Extension**.

SB 450 will extend the termination date of the State Lakes Protection and Restoration Program and Fund (SLPRPF) from June 2022 to June 2027, allowing DNR and MDE to address harmful and destructive issues impacting the 16 state-owned lakes in Maryland.

Deep Creek Lake in Garrett County, the largest freshwater lake and inland body of water in Maryland, is an economic engine, helping to generate an economic impact of \$360 million annually. The property tax revenue derived from the Deep Creek Lake watershed accounts for nearly 60% of County revenue. Deep Creek Lake is now 95 years old and as happens with any man-made lake, it is experiencing issues with aquatic invasive species (AIS), sediment accumulation, shoreline erosion and threats to water quality and conditions. The State, as the owner of Deep Creek Lake and 15 other lakes throughout Maryland, must provide ongoing funding for protection programs, restoration and remediation projects to sustain these important natural resources for future generations.

Please support Maryland's natural assets with a **FAVORABLE committee report on SB 450**.

Sincerely,

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