

Chesapeake Watershed Restoration Professionals

House Bill 1313 Environment – Exception to Nonstructural Shoreline Stabilization Requirements OPPOSE

March 7, 2022

Hon. Kumar Barve
Chairman, Environment and Transportation
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Barve, Vice-Chair Stein and members of the Committee,

The Chesapeake Watershed Restoration Professionals (CWRP) opposes HB 1313 and has significant concerns with the potential application of the legislation, if passed. CWRP was founded in November of 2020 and represents Maryland professionals whose daily work improves the health of Maryland's waters and our prized Chesapeake Bay.

This legislation proposes to allow licensed marine contractors to determine whether shoreline improvement projects should be allowed to avoid requirements to install non-structural shoreline protection. Although many of our members are Maryland Licensed Marine Contractors, and we love our marine contractors in Maryland, we do not think they are the appropriate entities to grant waivers as part of the permitting process. Because this is a permitting matter with ecological impacts, these determinations should be made by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), or whichever regulatory agency has jurisdiction on the matter.

CWRP has concerns granting a private business with the authority to waive existing laws and regulations as it relates to protecting the environment.

We thank the committee for their consideration of this important legislation and the issues we have raised. We look forward to working with you in the coming years to strengthen Maryland's ecological restoration laws.

Sincerely,

Liam O'Meara
President
Chesapeake Watershed Restoration Professionals