



February 16, 2022

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chairman
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Re: House Bill 653 – Conservation Finance Act

Position: *Support*

Chairman Barve & Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts to express our support for House Bill 653 – Conservation Finance Act. This bill makes changes to a host of existing State programs and expands opportunities for landowners across the State looking to participate in shared conservation efforts.

MASCD, incorporated in 1956, promotes practical and effective soil, water, and natural resource related programs to all Marylanders. Through individual conservation districts MASCD provides leadership, education, cooperation, and local direction, on a voluntary basis, promoting these initiatives. Our association strongly supports the continued funding and accessibility of all agricultural cost-share programs because of the great benefits they provide in improving water-quality and soil health through the installation of best management practices (BMPs).

I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 653, which shows your dedicated support to the agricultural community and a healthier Chesapeake Bay. Thank you for your kind consideration and attention to this legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts