



February 14, 2022

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chairman
House Environmental and Transportation Committee
House Office Building Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 601 – Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and Recreational Fishing – Pilot Program and Task Force Support

Dear Chairman Barve:

On behalf of the Marine Trades Association of Maryland, I am writing in support of HB 601 which will develop a pilot program for data collection under the Chesapeake Bay Coastal Sport Fishing License and create a Task Force to develop recommendations to improve recreational fisheries data by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The proposed pilot program would improve the data collection from the Chesapeake Bay & Coastal Sport Boat License to include better demographics as well as information on the numbers of trips taken and fish caught and released under the license. With this information, we can begin to understand the real impacts that fishing has on the health of the fisheries.

Further, HB 601 establishes a Task Force to identify actions that will improve our understanding of the recreational fishing activities and better scientific assessment of our fishery resources. The key here is to ascertain more accurate data on a statewide level so that we can better protect this natural resource.

I appreciate your time and consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Susan Zellers
Executive Director, MTAM

Cc: Members, House Environmental and Transportation Committee