

Statement of Jayson L. Spiegel
HB0727
Natural Resources – Great Maryland Outdoors Act
February 23, 2022
FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Jayson Spiegel. I am a Gaithersburg resident (District 17) and retired after 28 years commissioned service in the Army and Army Reserve. I am speaking in my personal capacity as an avid freshwater angler, who frequently fishes for bass and other species from the shores of Maryland's many lakes, ponds, rivers and streams.

Fishing with your family is one of the most memorable experiences available to Maryland residents. It is an inexpensive hobby that teaches children an appreciation for natural resources, patience, analytical skills and conservation. Nothing beats the smile on the face of a child when they catch and release their first fish.

The Great Maryland Outdoors Act will significantly enhance conservation and preservation of Maryland's natural resources. One area that may benefit from the act accessibility to, and repair and maintenance of, the shoreline surrounding bodies of water.

In many instances, it can be hazardous to fish from the shore at public bodies of water where fishing is permitted. It can be is hazardous to get to the shoreline and there may be limited level areas to safely stand. The difficulty of getting to the shoreline and then finding a safe place to stand is particularly problematic for young children, as well as anglers who are older or have mobility challenges. It can be particularly challenging for families that want to fish together but must maintain a sufficiently safe distance between themselves to ensure nobody is injured by a hook or rod while casting. Trash, including empty/broken bottles of alcohol, often litter shoreline fishing areas.

Natural resource officials must balance the need to preserve natural growth and topography with the safety of we Marylanders who fish from the shoreline. The Great Maryland Outdoors Act will provide additional resources to enhance the shoreline fishing experience for Maryland families.

For the above reasons, I respectfully request a **favorable report** on HB0727.

Jayson Spiegel
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