

Maryland Sportsmen's Foundation



February 14, 2022

To: Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair

Honorable Dana Stein, Vice Chair

Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

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

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On behalf of Maryland Sportsmen's Foundation, I am writing to support HB601.

The Maryland Sportsmen's Foundation is a Maryland non-profit that works with numerous hunting and fishing interest inside and outside of our great state. All Sportsmen and Women know the importance of managing our Natural Resources for current and future generations. All too often we forget the importance of good data that leads to proper management of our Natural Resources. When a Sportsman or woman is afield or on the water, they tend to think all is OK or all is Not OK with the resource based upon that particular experience. That could be 6 to 700,000 individual experiences at any given moment in the case of Maryland recreational fishing. This is why we need an improved tool to gather better...more complete data from our recreational anglers. No easy task without the right tools.

HB 601 is a step in the right direction.

1. We know Recreational fishing licenses are a core driver in funding DNR to manage our Natural Resources. This bill provides for a **task force** that we believe will **help guide those monies in the right direction and in the best interest of the fish and the anglers of Maryland.**
2. We know current Coast-Wide survey systems **do not** provide the level of accuracy to best manage our fisheries in a **timely manner.** We are currently managing through a **rearview mirror.** This Bill provides the tools to start looking ahead.
3. The proposed **Pilot Program** is focused on collecting data from Consolidated Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat License (**\$50 Boat Sticker**) holders. This is a **manageable number to survey.** Most importantly, it is the license we know the least about and can gather probably the most valuable data. This bill provides the tool to understand who, how many people and how many fish.
4. This Bill **does not affect commercial fishing interest.** They report for similar reasons.
5. This Bill is **not raising fees.**

**We respectfully request a favorable vote on HB 601.**

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Barve". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chairman, MD Sportsmen's Foundation