

# **HB 601\_CBF SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Allison Colden

Position: FAV



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## House Bill 601

Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and Recreational Fishing – Pilot Program and Task Force

Date: February 16, 2022

Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Allison Colden, Sr. Fisheries Scientist

---

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 601 which would develop a pilot program for data collection under the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and stand up a Task Force to develop recommendations to improve recreational fisheries data by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

In a recent report on recreational fisheries data focused on Maryland's iconic striped bass fishery, DNR examined the weaknesses and gaps in existing recreational fisheries data collection programs and provided several recommendations for improvement. While the coastwide federal recreational fisheries survey, the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), provides accurate data at the coastwide and statewide level, as the Program's data is parsed into two-month "waves" and different fishery sectors, the reliability and accuracy diminishes, adding significant uncertainty to management actions at the state level.

One area of significant uncertainty is angler effort – the number of anglers and how many trips each angler takes. Currently, the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License ('boat license') allows a licensee to carry unlicensed anglers on their vessel. Unlicensed anglers fishing under this boat license are required to complete a free registration. DNR believes that there is a high level of non-compliance with the free registration, which would impact the accuracy of angler effort data. The proposed pilot program would address this suspected data gap by requiring licensees to report number of trips, fish caught and their disposition, for all anglers fishing under the boat license.

HB 601 would also create a task force of recreational fishing stakeholders, scientists, and DNR staff to develop recommendations for actions that will further improve recreational fisheries data and subsequent fisheries assessments, including actions that will increase DNR's reach to underrepresented and underserved communities. These recommendations will address key data gaps identified by DNR. HB 601 is a positive first step to improving accuracy and timeliness of information key to recreational fisheries management.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 601.** For more information, please contact Dr. Allison Colden, Maryland Senior Fisheries Scientist at [acolden@cbf.org](mailto:acolden@cbf.org) and 443.482.2160.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403  
Phone (410) 268-8816 • Fax (410) 280-3513

*The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.*

# **HB601\_FAV\_Sutherland**

Uploaded by: David Sutherland

Position: FAV

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

---

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,

Chairman, MD Sportsmen's Foundation

# **JAJ 601 FISHING LICENSE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joanne Smith

Position: FAV

**JAY A. JACOBS**  
*Legislative District 36*  
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and  
Queen Anne's Counties

Environment and Transportation  
Committee

*Subcommittees*  
Motor Vehicles and Transportation  
Natural Resources, Agriculture,  
and Open Space

Joint Committee on Administrative,  
Executive, and Legislative Review



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 321  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3449 · 301-858-3449  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3449  
Fax 410-841-3093 · 301-858-3093  
Jay.Jacobs@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

## **HB 601 Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and Recreational Fishing – Pilot Program and Task Force**

**Chairman Barve and Members of Environment and Transportation committee,**

**Today I am presenting HB 601 which is a bill to improve the reporting of data for the recreational catching of striped bass in the State of Maryland. This legislation establishes the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License Pilot Program to collect certain recreational fishing information and improve compliance with certain registration requirements. It also establishes a Task Force on Recreational Fishing Data Collection and Licensing to study and develop multiyear plans for improving the collection and quality of certain recreational fishing data.**

**There are an estimated 750,000 recreational fishermen and women that annually fish in Maryland and the current reporting of catch, disposition and biological data reported is very poor to say the least.**

**There are currently several methods used to collect data referred to as MRIP. One is [FES] which is a very limited mail survey sent to households along the coast that are members of the Saltwater Anglers registries. The second [AP AIS] is a dockside intercept survey that is used to calculate catch rates. These interviews are very, very limited around the State.**

**There is also a voluntary anglers survey that is available online. Participation in that program is extremely light as well. In 2014-86 trips reported. 2015-67 trips. 2016-70. 2017-74. 2018-133. 2019 which is the most current information there were 106 trips reported.**

**In 2014 and 2020, legislation was passed requiring the Department of Natural Resources to conduct a study on methods of obtaining more accurate harvest data for the recreational striped bass fishery. There have not been improvements made for the collection of better data reporting, so the legislation before you makes improvements to obtain more accurate data.**

# **HB601 RecFishTaskForce\_Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Susan Zellers

Position: FAV





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



**HB601\_CCAMD.pdf**

Uploaded by: David Sikorski

Position: FWA

Date: February 16<sup>th</sup> , 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

### **CCA Maryland Position: Support w/ Amendments**

---

As Maryland's largest recreational fishing organization, and a longtime participant in cooperative fisheries management actions in Maryland and beyond, CCA Maryland supports House Bill 601.

This bill will develop both a pilot program and stakeholder driven task force to take important steps forward in our collective understanding of recreational fishing activities and the sustainable management of our shared natural resources.

#### Task Force:

This action empowers recreational fishing stakeholders to work with Maryland DNR and academic partners to work as a task force to identify actions that can be taken and funded to improve our understanding of recreational fishing activities and the scientific assessment of our fishery resources.

- Recreational fishing licenses are a core driver in funding to Maryland DNR to manage our shared marine resources.
- Licenses allow Maryland DNR to understand who is fishing so they may survey participants to understand their activities on the water.
- Recreational fishery based data is a very important component of the science based systems to estimate fish populations and ensure sustainable management.
- Current coast-wide survey systems do not provide the level of statistical accuracy needed to better manage our fisheries in a timely and local manner.

#### Pilot Program:

Supported with the following amendments.

**Bold text to be added**

**Page 3:**

(C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PILOT PROGRAM IS TO:

(1) COLLECT CONTACT INFORMATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF INDIVIDUALS FISHING UNDER A **CONSOLIDATED** CHESAPEAKE BAY AND COASTAL ~~SPORT BOAT~~ FISHING LICENSE ISSUED UNDER § 4-745(D)(2) OF THIS SUBTITLE;

(2) COLLECT INFORMATION REGARDING THE NUMBER OF TRIPS TAKEN AND FISH CAUGHT AND RELEASED UNDER A **CONSOLIDATED** CHESAPEAKE BAY AND COASTAL ~~SPORT BOAT~~ FISHING LICENSE; AND

(D) TO MAINTAIN ELIGIBILITY TO PURCHASE A **CONSOLIDATED** CHESAPEAKE BAY AND COASTAL ~~SPORT BOAT~~ FISHING LICENSE, THE HOLDER OF THE LICENSE SHALL PROVIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF 14 THIS SECTION.

If amended,

- The proposed pilot program should be focused on improving the data collection associated with the Consolidated Chesapeake Bay & Coastal Sport Boat License (boat license)
- The proposed pilot program is an example of an action that can be taken now to improve a known knowledge gap in the current licensing structure and an issue with compliance with current reporting requirements.
- The proposed pilot program does not increase any fees on fishery participants.
- The specific purpose of the pilot program as proposed in the legislation:
- To collect demographic data of individuals fishing under a boat license
- Collect information regarding the number of trips taken and fish caught and released under a boat license
- Improve FREE registration compliance under current regulations
- Requiring reporting to obtain the boat license in a subsequent year.

The text below which describes the boat license and FREE registration is taken directly from a Maryland DNR website ([https://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/service\\_fishing\\_license.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/service_fishing_license.aspx))

**Consolidated Chesapeake Bay & Coastal Sport Boat License** allows everyone on board a vessel used for pleasure to fish in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and the state waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Atlantic coastal bays and tributaries in lieu of individual licenses. However, these individuals must register with the Department (see below). A special complimentary Bay & Coastal sport fishing license, which includes recreational crabbing, will be issued to the boat owner purchasing this license. The \$50 Chesapeake Bay Sport Fishing Decal is NOT valid as a Recreational Crabbing Boat License (though the purchaser of this decal is given one complimentary individual recreational crabbing license).

**FREE Chesapeake Bay & Coastal Sport Registration** Unless individually licensed, registration is required for MD. waterfront property owners, those fishing in a designated free fishing area, and passengers on a vessel displaying a Boat License (decal) from MD, VA, or PRFC. In the Potomac River a registration is required for passengers on a vessel displaying a Boat License decal from MD, VA, or PRFC, and for the owner or owner's nonpaying guest fishing from private real property or an attached pier in the tidal waters of the Potomac River.

**For these reasons, we respectfully request a FAVORABLE vote on HB 601 if amended.** *For further discussion regarding this issue, please contact CCA Maryland Executive Director, David Sikorski – (443)621-9186 – [david@ccamd.org](mailto:david@ccamd.org)*