

SB0422 SUPPORT

Natural Resources - Black Bass Conservation Fund - Establishment.

Members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee

I'd like to thank Senators Cory McCray, Sarah Elfreth and Jack Bailey for their support of Senate Bill 0422.

I am a member of the Maryland Sport Fish Advisory Commission, Chairman of the Black Bass Advisory Committee and president of the Maryland Bass Nation.

The Black Bass Advisory Committee works with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to monitor the status of Maryland's black bass freshwater and tidal water populations, make recommendations regarding fishery population management to MD DNR fishery managers, and report to Maryland's Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission regarding these matters. Black Bass Advisory Committee members and their constituents represent the full range of black bass anglers, from the casual recreational angler to the serious tournament participant.

The bill would establish a donation program for black bass management in Maryland. The Black Bass Conservation Fund would provide MD DNR the legal method to process donations and use these funds for;

- Stocking bass
- Enhance aquatic habitat
- Support responsible bass tournaments
- Support scientific research related to conservation of black bass resources

This fund's donations would come voluntarily from sportsmen purchasing an angler's license or Chesapeake Bay Coastal Sports Fishing License in Maryland.

The MD DNR would seek the Black Bass Advisory Committee's input to prioritize the fund's use based on the current state of science and interests of Maryland's 200,000+ recreational bass anglers.

In closing, I strongly support the proposed legislation to establish the Black Bass Conservation Fund and urge the committee to take favorable action on all matters related to SB0422.

Roger Trageser