

**SB 0422 SUPPORT**

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**Black Bass Conservation Fund – Establishment**

Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 1:00 pm

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and members of Education, Energy and Environment Committee,

As a recreational angler and scientist advising the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, I fully support SB0422.

The Black Bass Advisory Committee works to understand the status of Maryland's black bass (primarily largemouth and smallmouth bass) freshwater and tidal water populations, makes recommendations regarding fishery population management to MD DNR fishery managers, and reports to Maryland's Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission regarding these matters. Black Bass Advisory Committee members represent everyone from tournament directors and anglers, to professional guides and recreational anglers.

This bill would establish a donation program for black bass, largemouth bass and smallmouth, bass management in Maryland. The Black Bass Conservation Fund would provide MD DNR the legal means to process donations and use the funds for black bass management related to:

- stocking bass
- enhancing aquatic habitat
- supporting responsible bass tournaments, and
- supporting research related to conservation of black bass resource.

This fund's donations would come voluntarily from purchases of an angler's license or Chesapeake Bay Coastal Sports Fishing License in Maryland, and alleviate fiscal pressures on MD DNR resources and black bass management.

As one of the nearly 250,000 bass anglers in Maryland, I strongly support the proposed legislation to establish the Black Bass Conservation Fund and SB0422.

Signed

Andrew E. Ralowicz, Ph.D.  
Maryland Black Bass Advisory Committee