

MARYLAND STATE BAR ASSOCIATION ANIMAL LAW SECTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section
Kimberly L. Fullerton, Esq.
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RE: Senate Bill 320 – Natural Resources – Wildlife Advisory Commission – Membership
DATE: February 13, 2023
POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section is in support of SB 320, which would update membership requirements of the Commission responsible for advising the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) on the management of Maryland’s wildlife resources. The Commission is composed of nine members appointed by the Governor.

I. Expertise in Environmental Science is Necessary to Safeguard Maryland’s Natural Resources

SB 320 requires the Governor to appoint to the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission (“Commission”) one member who is an academic researcher with expertise in wildlife biology, wildlife conservation, wildlife management, or ecology.

Environmental Science is a highly technical field. The Commission should include an academic researcher to ensure that advice to DNR considers scientific principles related to the management of natural resources.

II. The Commission Should Update and Diversify Current Membership Requirements

SB 320 would update an existing membership requirement by requiring additional representation from the hunting or fishing communities, the wildlife preservation community, and the passive wildlife recreation community.

This bill is necessary to ensure that the perspectives and concerns of Maryland’s diverse communities are represented in management of the State’s natural resources.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

Kimberly Fullerton,

Immediate Past Chair

Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section

cc: Maryland State Bar Association