



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 188
Natural Resources - Wildlife Advisory Commission - Membership

The Wildlife Advisory Commission was created to advise the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources on wildlife matters. The nine members serve at the pleasure of the Governor of Maryland.

This legislation would ensure the Commission includes a diverse set of stakeholders to represent the varied interests of the public in the management of our state's wildlife and natural resources.

Currently, Commission membership must include a representative from the farming community. This bill expands the membership requirements to also include representatives from the hunting or fishing community, the wildlife preservation community, the passive wildlife recreation community (such as hikers, bird watchers, etc.), and an academic researcher who has expertise in wildlife biology, wildlife management, ecology, or a closely related field. The inclusion of a scientist is especially important, as the Wildlife Advisory Commission is the only state board or commission with a science-related mission that is not legislatively mandated to have scientist member.

This bill guarantees that all major stakeholder groups are included in the discussion of matters related to the state's wildlife.