



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

Bill: HB 983
Committee: House Environment and Transportation Committee
Position: FAVORABLE
Date: March 3, 2023

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The Humane Society of the United States, on behalf of our Maryland members and supporters, supports House Bill 983. While the bill has multiple components, the most critical part of the legislation is that, by raising hunting license fees a modest amount, the bill would significantly increase funding for Maryland's Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife and Heritage Service, ensuring more resources for wildlife management and conservation funding across the state.

Every dollar the State raises in hunting and trapping license fees is matched by federal funding. Those funds are the primary source of revenue for the State's efforts to restore habitat, conduct scientific research and education, and manage Maryland's wildlife for future generations. However, over the years the number of licenses sold has steadily decreased while license fees have remained the stagnant, and as a result, every year, the State leaves more and more federal matching dollars on the table. Therefore, increasing license fees alone would significantly increase the amount of revenue that the State receives in federal funding to support the work of State's Wildlife and Heritage Service.

The work of the Wildlife and Heritage Service is critical to protect and preserve Maryland's native species and the habitat in which they reside. This bill is not only supported by the Humane Society of the United States but also by a broad coalition of groups, strong evidence of its merit. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 983.