



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 406 – Hunting – Snares, Traps, and
Other similar Devices – Identification Requirement**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Members of ENT:

HB 406 strives to increase enforcement and accountability for those that set traps outside the law. This committee should be proud of the work it has done to create a strong framework for hunting and trapping laws in Maryland. Unfortunately, that good work is too swiftly and easily undone by individuals who fail to follow those laws. Currently, individuals who set traps and violate our trapping regulations cannot be identified or held accountable. HB 406 seeks to change that by requiring that traps (except those set by a landowner on his or her own private property) have the identification number of the trapper, so if a violation should occur DNR can take appropriate action.

Under current law, someone must have a furbearer permit to hunt, chase, or trap a furbearer (coyote, raccoon, and other animals), except within limited exemptions. Because the DNR already maintains a system for licensing trappers, those identification numbers can be used to identify traps and associate them with the individual. In the limited instances where an individual is not required to get a permit, the bill specifies that they can get a free identification tag from the Department of Natural Resources for their trap instead. The use of this identification number keeps the individual's information private while enabling follow through by the DNR when necessary.

This tagging requirement will improve enforcement and public trust in our wildlife management laws. Should an individual violate our laws – for example, placing traps inappropriately or failing to check the trap within the required timeframe, the DNR would be able to identify that trapper and take action. Should traps be set illegally, without identification at all, the DNR would have the ability to identify that unlawful activity has taken place and work to catch and identify the individuals responsible. And in the extreme situation where a family pet or unintended wildlife gets caught in a trap, the DNR could contact the trapper without delay.

I am proud to have worked with my crossfile, Senator Bailey, with feedback from the MD DNR and the Maryland Fur Trappers, to advance this bill. This legislation strives to protect the

interests of all stakeholders, creating greater accountability for bad actors instead of allowing public outcry to grow against trappers in general.

When trapping laws are not followed it leads to cruelty and suffering. All stakeholders can agree that our laws should be followed, and that trapping should be done humanely as possible. I am grateful for bipartisan support for this common sense reform, and I ask the Committee for a favorable vote.