

House Bill 886 – SUPPORT

**House Bill 886 – Environment - CAD Task Force
House Committee on Environment and Transportation
February 23, 2024**

My name is Ruth Sliviak. I live on the waterfront of Rock Creek in Northern Anne Arundel County. My husband and I purchased our property over 30 years ago, and built our dream home between Maryland Yacht Club and Fairview Marina 9 years ago. We have been avid boaters, water skiers, kayakers and swimmers for over 40 years. We also enjoy crabbing and fishing in the area. We have seen so many positive changes within the 9 years that we have been living here regarding the water quality. We have 7 grandchildren who they love coming to stay with us so that they can build beautiful childhood memories and play out in nature, safely. It is a common sight and part of our area's long term culture and history, to see families enjoying boating in Stoney Creek, Rock Creek and the Patapsco River. Individual fisherman, charter fisherman, recreational crabbers, and commercial crabbers habitually frequent these waterways.

The negative health and environmental damage that would sweep the area should the CAD project be allowed, would be absolutely devastating to locals' way of life, leisure activities as well as to the natural world. I would no longer feel safe, living, swimming or recreating in our area because of the short term and long term effects of the CAD project. The disruption to the area would be extensive, not only affecting the water, but the surrounding residential areas and woodland habitats of native species of animals. This issue pales in comparison to the concerns of the toxicity of the material and method but is still a concern worthy of attention and consideration. The economic repercussions of instituting this project would be catastrophic to the local business community - specifically the restaurants and marinas in the area. The negative impact of this project would certainly decrease the values of our waterfront homes - affecting families, retirements, and long term financial planning of those of us who chose to live in this community because of its beauty, stability, and safety.

I understand that the Baltimore Harbor and its shipping channel needs to be dredged and that the material needs to be removed. However, that material must be removed in a safe way and placed in a contained area that will not impact our environment negatively. The port generates billions of dollars for our State and the businesses that are here. That does come at a cost but it certainly shouldn't cost us our ability to have a safe environment and hinder us from living and enjoying our property and waterways.

The MPA has been extremely negligent in communicating their plans to use the CAD to the citizens of North Anne Arundel County and to our legislative representatives. It is my understanding based on research that there are currently no CAD sites that are located within residential communities and recreational waterways. They are located next to industrial areas where the material was removed to limit the environmental impact. Where they have put CAD sites or used existing deep holes that had been dredged previously, there were concerns about the issues surrounding Ambient Air PCB's as well.

The Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) will destroy an area that has rebounded significantly after years of decline. The project does not include a remediation plan in the event there is spillage whether in the water or in the air which I can't imagine there wouldn't be of the "contaminated dredge material" whether in the process or once in place. The "material" that is being removed to be replaced by the contaminated dredged material is needed by the Port Authority so that they use it to "fuel" their reuse program, but it is likened to strip mining. The material that is being dredged

out of the shipping channels is contaminated and not able to be used for that purpose in its current state. If the Port Authority continues as planned, they will be dredging wider channels which means a higher concentration of highly contaminated material because it has not been dredged before.

It is essential that there is the oversight of an independent CAD task force not over-populated with MPA representatives or their contractors to consider the environmental safety and human health of our community. It is deeply disturbing that there was no knowledge of this planned CAD project and that the potential impact on our community was not being considered or protected. It is being presented as a 20-acre site when upon further pressing this would extend to Fort Smallwood State Park. Fort Smallwood has devoted many thousands, if not millions of dollars to improving the beach areas and facilities for the community that no one will be able to use because of potential safety concerns. Anne Arundel County has stabilized regarding its cancer rate after years of being one of the highest in the State. I would venture to say it has a lot to do with the chemical exposure from this very area. We are already flooded with chemical production and pollution, and it appears that the Maryland Port Authority would like to further injure our area.

It is my opinion that the Patapsco needs to have the most environmentally sensitive laws not the least. We have all worked so hard to improve our area and to see it destroyed is reckless and irrational. This project has been considered for many years and wasn't brought to light to anyone until the meeting that was organized back in June by an informed resident.

It is my understanding that the Maryland Port Authority does not have an established option if the CAD project doesn't move forward or has issues. They have no cohesive plan to be implemented if there is a spillage of the toxic dredged material whether in the air or water. This was specifically brought up at the last meeting with the MPA being very unprepared to respond to the question. The only response was it would depend on the situation however when a specific situation was brought up, they had no response.

It is paramount that the task force proposed in House Bill 886 is moved into legislation. It's important that the task force has independent science experts, impacted citizens, and watermen in its membership. It's also important that the task force has meaningful bidirectional interactions with impacted communities in North Anne Arundel County and with our legislative representatives.

Sincerely,



Ruth Sliviak – Rock Creek