



## MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 21, 2024

To: The House Environment and Transportation Committee  
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
Re: Natural Resources - Protection of Beaver Population and Habitat - County Authority (Beaver Believer Act)- HB 631 - Support

Chair Korman, Vice - Chair Boyce, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across the State of Maryland, I respectfully ask that the House Environment & Transportation Committee vote favorably for Natural Resources - Protection of Beaver Population and Habitat - County Authority (Beaver Believer Act) – HB 631.

This bill would authorize a county, notwithstanding a certain provision of law, to enact a local law to promote, protect, and support the population and habitat of beavers in the county.

Beavers are ecosystem engineers because they create, modify, and maintain habitat and ecosystems. They consequently have a large impact on the biodiversity of an area. They bring wood into the water, and that wood provides food and shelter for insects in our region. Moreover, Beaver dams benefit a multitude of native species as the ponds they create store cool water in summer, creating habitat for the region's important native aquatic species.

Maryland Votes for Animals supports the efforts of local jurisdictions to protect beavers as they provide benefits to neighboring species that have ramifications on our ecosystem and environment.

In closing, I would like to thank Delegate Allen for his sponsorship of HB 631 and ask the committee for a favorable report.