

House Bill 886 – SUPPORT

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

My name is Heather O'Neal. I live in the waterfront community of Nabbs Creek, in Northern Anne Arundel County. I moved here just to enjoy the beautiful water view and all the activities we are able to enjoy on the water, including boating, fishing, wake surfing, and swimming.

Because I love my family and care for their health more than anything, the risks and impacts of Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) dumping of contaminated dredge material are enough to keep my family out of the water and not being able to enjoy the life that we not only love, but that we paid a good price to enjoy freely and without concern. Not only will these things be directly affected, but also our wonderful well-established eco-system in place and the fish and crabs that depend on the health of it to survive. This not only affects us who live here, but all those who depend on the fish and crabs for food. Why choose a location this close to a well established community of people who enjoy their clean water so much? Why take the chance of taking away what we have here as our livelihood? Would you let your kids and grandkids play here in the water knowing what you had dumped? Would you risk it?

During the meetings I noticed that the CAD staff not only didn't answer questions, but also seemed to not have a plan in order if their so called well thought out plan didn't work. I also got the feeling that they were basically laughing at those representing our community because of our concerns. If this plan does go thru, it is imperative that there is oversight of an independent CAD task force not over-populated with MPA representatives or their contractors to consider the environmental safety, human health. We could never fully trust a task force that worked for the people making the promises.

It is important that the task force proposed in House Bill 886 is moved into legislation. It's important 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,

Heather O'Neal

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Nabbs Creek