



Saving the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and Special Places

Earl Conservation Center | 1212 West Street | Annapolis, MD 21401

www.chesapeakeconservancy.org | 443.321.3610

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EJ Amyot | Interim President & CEO
Chesapeake Conservancy

Keith F. Anderson, Chief
Nansemond Indian Nation

Daniel M. Ashe
Association of Zoos & Aquariums

Richard Batiuk
US EPA Chesapeake Bay Program, Ret.

Astrid Caldas
Union of Concerned Scientists

Matthew Earl
MHE Foundation

Adam Gronski
WETA

Colin Harrington
Zephyr Energy

Ed Hatcher | Vice Chair
The Hatcher Group, Ret

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth
Town of Bladensburg, Maryland

Randall W. Larrimore
Campbell & Olin; Ret. Board Director
Ret. CEO of two Fortune 500 Cos.

Pamela D. Marks
Beveridge & Diamond, PC

Stephanie Meeks | Chair
One Page Solutions, LLC

Vibha Jain Miller
National Women's Law Center

Scott Phillips
U.S. Geological Survey, Ret.

Michael Reynolds
National Park Service, Ret.

Jeffrey Sabot, CPA | Treasurer
Cherry Bekaert Advisory, LLC

Ava Shivers, CPA
Student Conservation Association

Philip Tabas | Secretary
The Nature Conservancy

Stephanie Vaughn
Environmental Engineer

HONORARY DIRECTOR

Gilbert M. Grosvenor
National Geographic Society

EMERITUS DIRECTORS

Patrick F. Noonan
The Conservation Fund

Charles A. Stek
Environmental Stewardship Strategies

Date: March 4, 2025

Bill Number: **HB 631 - Eminent Domain - Agricultural and Conservation Easements - Prohibited Taking**

Committee: House Economic Matters

Position: Favorable

Chairman Wilson and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

Chesapeake Conservancy supports HB 631 - Eminent Domain - Agricultural and Conservation Easements - Prohibited Taking.

Quite simply, **this bill just prevents the state, or any of its instrumentalities or political subdivisions, from taking -- by eminent domain -- privately owned property that is subject to a perpetual agricultural or conservation easement.**

Land conservation isn't just about creating or enhancing parks for better mental and physical wellness. Among many other benefits, conservation helps improve water quality, helps keep the family farm in business, helps provides resilience against a changing climate, slows the biodiversity decline, and helps connect the present with the past. Conservation easements are critical investments into Maryland's future, while meeting the numerous green space needs that exist now.

Chesapeake Conservancy is the only watershed-wide organization focused on both land conservation and stream restoration to achieve a healthier Chesapeake Bay. We ask that you continue to invest in conservation and restoration, and we thank you for your service.

For further information, please contact Mark Conway, Executive Vice President of External Affairs, at MConway@ChesapeakeConservancy.org or 443-321-3610.

We respectfully request a favorable committee report.