

## **Testimony in Support of SB0898**

**Senate Energy, Education, and Environment Committee February 18, 2025**

**Submitted on February 14, 2024**

**To Chair Feldman and Committee Members,**

**My name is Karen Holcomb. I live in Chestertown, Maryland near Fairlee Creek and I urge a favorable report on SB 0898. Thank you in advance for your consideration**

This Bill that is based upon a culmination of five (5) years of research will increase the effectiveness of riparian buffers to trap nutrient pollution while protecting both the Bay and farm lands from erosion. SB 0898 bill does not increase the current farming setback area but only where to apply the fertilizer. In addition, SB 0898 bill will;

- Mandatory -Increase nutrient application setbacks on farmland bordering tidal water to 100 feet.
- Voluntary - Increase tiered incentives for landowners that adapt or extend to 100 feet fixed natural filter along tidal waters
- Voluntary -Establish a separate incentive for farmers who operate on farmland in the Critical Areas with fixed natural filters.
- Voluntary - For the first time, extend the incentive program to the fastest growing generation of farmers that lease farm lands and play an important role in this conservation work.
- This bill compliments the DNR, MDA and the Tree Solutions Now 2021 state goals.

DNR's department goal is to restore 2,000 miles of riparian forest buffers in Maryland by 2025.

MDA's department goal to increase by 50% (to 3,000 per year) the number of best management practices (BMP) installed to meet reduction goals.

Tree Solutions Now 2021, with funding sunseting in 2030, has a goal to plant 5,000 trees by 2030.

This bill minimizes the impact on farmers and maximizes the positive impacts on the precious jewel of the Chesapeake Bay and all its estuaries.

Attached in a separate PDF is more information from the Shore Rivers Organization as you consider favorable support of SB 0898, which encompasses a science based approach to Nutrient Management- Tidal Buffer, Vegetation Buffers and Restriction on Fertilizer Application.

I **support/oppose** this bill because... [WHY DO YOU SUPPORT/YOUR PERSONAL STORY].

Thank you for your consideration, and I look to this committee to give **SBXXXX** a **favorable/unfavorable** report.

Sincerely,

**NAME**

**CONTACT INFO (optional)**