

Testimony in support of SB168
Carl Treff, Pasadena

To Committee Chair Feldman and committee, thank you for allowing my testimony today.

My name is Carl Treff, and I am here today to testify in favor of SB168 and the prohibition of confined aquatic disposal (CAD) near overburdened communities. As a lifelong resident of Pasadena, on the shores of “ground zero” where CAD is intended by the Maryland Port Administration, I am highly concerned about CAD’s effects on residents, recreation, and river habitat. We are already faced with pollution from power plants, wastewater treatment plants, illegal incinerator dumping, and decades-long pollution from Bethlehem Steel.

It is well known that the Patapsco River is heavily industrialized. But at a certain point the outer river morphs into a highly residential and recreational area. Despite what you might think, our river is alive!

The outer part of our river is ringed with communities that enjoy their waterfront for boating, kayaking, tubing, fishing, crabbing, swimming, and even watching dolphins graze. There are public boat ramps, public parks, kids sail camps, sailing regattas, just to name a few things.

Now, imagine digging a 90’ deep hole, equivalent in size to 15 football fields, right in the middle of our river. Not only does the initial dig potentially stir up decades-old contaminants, but this 20-acre hole will destroy upwards of 160 million bottom dwelling organisms which are the beginning of the food chain. Once the initial hole is dug, dredge spoils are then placed in it. So, there is a double dip of muck going in and coming out of the hole. The extent of drifting silt has yet to be addressed, yet two restoration oyster reefs, decades in the making, sit a mile or two away. Assuming MPA gets their foot in the door with their first pilot CAD site, there are certainly plans to keep gouging more 20-acre holes in our river after that.

As a resident, recreationalist, and environmental steward of the Patapsco River, I can attest that our river is indeed alive! Mining and destroying the bottom of our river is a half-baked idea, and the MPA has yet to prove without a doubt that CAD is an environmentally safe alternative to land-based dredge storage. I urge you to vote yes for SB168. Our river is not MPA’s landfill.

Testimony submitted by:
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