

Testimony in Support of SB0898
Nutrient Management – Tidal Buffer – Vegetative Buffers and Restriction on Fertilizer Application

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee 18 February 2025
Submitted on 14 February 2025 before 5 pm

To the Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Carole Trippe. I live in Chestertown, MD near the Chester River on the Eastern Shore, and I urge a favorable report on SB0898. Thank you in advance for your consideration of support.

According to an analysis by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, there are 2,665 acres of crop and pastureland within 100 feet of tidal water in Maryland. Much of that land is located on the Eastern Shore, where both our natural lands and farms are experiencing pressures - from surface and groundwater, pollution saltwater intrusion, and increasingly severe weather and rain events – which make farming productively a growing challenge. **SB0898 targets smart policy, conservation practices, and support for farmers in our most ecologically sensitive areas of the Chesapeake.**

This Bill benefits both Maryland farmers and the Chesapeake Bay by:

- Preventing water pollution from agricultural fertilizer use that would otherwise be permitted 100 feet from Maryland tidal water
- Improving incentive programs for fixed natural filter adoption within the 100 feet of tidal water
- Creating the state’s first incentive program that provides **value to tenant farmers** — the growing future for on-farm conservation

I **support** Bill SB0898 because it strengthens near-shore restoration which was identified as a top priority in the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Comprehensive Evaluation of Systems Response (CESR) Report. I routinely boat and kayak on the main stem and creeks of the Chester River, and I have observed substantial loss of forest buffers. By focusing on lands within 100 feet of Maryland tidal water, this Bill will **maximize environmental benefits while minimizing loss of productive agricultural lands.**

Thank you for your consideration, and I look to this committee to give SB0898 a **favorable** report.

Sincerely,
Carole Trippe
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