

Testimony in Support of HB1175

Nearshore Farming and Finance Act

House Environment and Transportation Committee, hearing 2/28/25
Submitted on 2/26/25

To All Committee Members,

My name is Ray Earnest. I live in Caroline County on the shores of the Choptank River close to many acres of farmland, and I urge a favorable report on HB1175.

Probably the most ecologically sensitive land in Maryland is the land that lies within 100 feet of tidal water, and the condition of this land is, of course, the most impactful for our waterways. This bill seeks to protect that land and the water it borders by:

- Preventing water pollution from agricultural fertilizer use that would otherwise be permitted 100 feet from Maryland tidal water
- Improving incentives 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, who in fact farm a large percentage of the land devoted to agriculture in Maryland

I support this bill because I care deeply about the health of our waterways, which is intimately connected to the health of our citizens. Already we often have warnings not to eat fish caught in the Choptank and other Maryland waterways. We simply must take action to prevent

further damage and eventually restore the health of our Maryland waters.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look to this committee to give HBX1175 a favorable report.

Sincerely,
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