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Education, Energy, and
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Executive Nominations Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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The House Environment and Transportation Committee
SB 946 – Endangered and Threatened Species – Incidental Taking - Bats
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the distinguished House Environment and Transportation Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 946 – Endangered and Threatened Species – Incidental Taking – Bats and ask for a favorable report.

SB 946 unanimously passed the Senate, and the crossfile, House Bill 894, sponsored by Delegate Jacobs, unanimously passed the House.

This is a bat conservation bill. SB 946 would allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish a permit process to allow for the incidental takings of the northern long-eared bat, the tri-colored bat, or the Indiana bat, and the Eastern Small-Footed Bat. This process would include the approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan and would ensure a balanced approach to both conservation and forest management that is already practiced at the federal level under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

This process is not new to Maryland. Two other animals are allowed incidental takings in our State: the Delmarva Fox Squirrel and the Puritan Tiger Beetle. These conservation efforts have resulted in the Delmarva Fox Squirrel being removed from the endangered species list in December 2015.

Forests require management and maintenance to remain productive for wildlife, to provide more diverse habitat, and to be less susceptible to disease and insect damage. The ESA allows for Habitat Conservation Plans and Incidental Take Permits both to support healthy forests that are essential for long-term conservation and to protect the economic importance of forests.

Additionally, the recent listing of the northern long-eared bat as endangered and the potential for the additional bat species in this bill to receive similar designation is anticipated to affect urban areas as well as rural areas. Bats hibernate in attics and under the eaves of older buildings which would impact development and urban revitalization.

This bat conservation legislation, Senate Bill 946, is a measured and fair approach, promoting long-term conservation of these endangered bat species while ensuring necessary land management activities of Maryland forests. I thank you for your kind attention and consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 946.