

February 17, 2025

Chair Korman, Environment and Transportation Committee

Maryland House of Delegates Room 251

House Office Building Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 878: Vernal Pool Wetlands Protection Act of 2025

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Maryland Environment and Transportation Committee:

I urge you to support protection for vernal pool wetlands in Maryland. Vernal pools are important because they provide ecological services for a variety of species, including important breeding habitat for amphibians, integration of aquatic and terrestrial food webs, pollution removal, groundwater replenishment, and natural mosquito control (amphibians, birds, and bats). Your protection will support the breeding of obligate and facultative biological species dependent on vernal pools, including the buffer zones needed to support their full life cycle.

This legislation will require MDE to designate vernal pools as named wetlands in MDE regulations using the new definition MDE developed in December 2024 and develop a plan for identifying vernal pools in Maryland, to the extent practicable and economically feasible. These actions seem reasonable and possible to accomplish, even in this period of fiscal restraint. I hope you will encourage Department of the Environment to continue to work closely with the environmental and scientific communities to protect these vital ecological resources and their biological diversity.

I respectfully request you to issue a Favorable Report for the Vernal Pool Wetlands Protection Act of 2025, HB0878.

Thank you,

David Mosher

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