

HB 1267 – PROTECTING PATUXENT RESEARCH REFUGE ACT – WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN
FAVOR OF THE BILL

To: Members of the House Economic Matters Committee (ECM)
Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee (ENT)

I write on behalf of the Baltimore Bird Club's Conservation Committee to voice our strong support for the passage of HB 1267 – Protecting Patuxent Research Refuge Act.

The Patuxent Research Refuge has been a valuable, important, and iconic refuge and research center since it was created by Executive Order of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1936. The Refuge is an irreplaceable resource for wildlife conservation, ecological research, environmental education, and outdoor recreation. It is the only site in the National Wildlife Refuge System with a primary mission of wildlife research.

The Refuge was purposely sited adjacent to the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), established by the USDA in 1910, so that the two units could coordinate their research work on environmental factors affecting wildlife and domestic animals. The landscape that encompasses BARC and Patuxent Research Refuge is considered the most intensively studied and documented natural area in the world. The DDT research cited by Rachel Carson's in her book *Silent Spring* was conducted on plots at Patuxent that are still in existence, allowing long-term comparison of DDT uptake data. At BARC, long-running soil nutrient experiments have led to improvements in agricultural practices through the Mid-Atlantic region. Many other examples of long-term research exist on the 13,000 acres occupied by Patuxent Research Refuge and 6,500 acres occupied by BARC.

The Refuge and BARC preserve rare, large tracts of unbroken forest in central Maryland, crucial for migratory songbirds and deserve protection.

Enacting HB 1267 will help ensure permanent protection of these vital habitats, preserve critical research sites used by scientists and students, and maintain public access to the Refuge for birdwatchers, educators, and nature enthusiasts. Protecting the Refuge and BARC advances Maryland's commitments to biodiversity, climate resilience, and science-based resource management, while supporting the health and well-being of local communities through ecosystem services such as water quality improvement, mitigation of air pollution, and flood mitigation.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Bird Club (a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.) urges you to support and advance HB 1267. We appreciate your consideration and are available to provide additional information in support of the bill.

Sincerely,



Kathy Lambrow
Chair, Conservation Committee



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