

To the Members of the House Economic Matters Committee  
Regarding **HB1267**  
Protecting Patuxent Research Refuge Act  
March 6, 2026

## **Support With Amendment**

Laurel for the Patuxent, Inc. (L4P), a nonprofit, grassroots organization in Laurel dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Patuxent River and its watershed is pleased to support HB1267, the Protecting Patuxent Research Refuge Act.

Beyond the storied history of its groundbreaking wildlife research and protection, such as the pioneering and successful effort almost 60 years ago by the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center to save the majestic whooping crane, the importance of the very existence of the Patuxent Research Refuge as a large forested area in the Patuxent River watershed cannot be overstated.

As development reduces the effective water shedding ability of land within the Patuxent River watershed, it is critical that we protect what's left when we can. And there is no more crucial area worthy of our protection than the Patuxent Research Refuge.

We wholeheartedly support the spirit of HB1267, and request the following amendment to Section 1, page 3, 25(2) to read as follows:

**(2) DOES NOT PERMIT COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, OR RESIDENTIAL USES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AND PRESERVES ALL EXISTING ACRES IN NATURAL CONDITIONS IN PERPETUITY, EXCLUDING CONTINUED USE OF PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED AREAS FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THAT IS LIMITED TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION.**

By protecting the Patuxent Research Refuge you have the opportunity to educate the public in the most meaningful way about what the term watershed really means. You can help counter efforts to dilute or misrepresent the term, as evidenced locally by a nearby development that replaced acres of trees and permeable land with impermeable buildings and surfaces, and had the audacity to call itself "Watershed."

By protecting the Patuxent Research Refuge you will show how important the watershed of the Patuxent River is, to the river itself, to the wildlife and vegetation around the river, and ultimately, to the quality of our lives and the lives of generations to come.

We urge you to pass HB1267 with amendment .

Thank you,

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