

# SENATE BILL 701

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CF HB 775

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By: **Senator Mautz**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Wetlands and Waterways Permits – Lighthouse Piers – Permission of Owner of**  
3 **Private Wetlands**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from being required to obtain permission from the  
5 owner of private wetlands in order to construct a certain pier under certain  
6 circumstances; and generally relating to wetlands and waterways permits and the  
7 construction of piers.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
9 Article – Environment  
10 Section 16–101(a), (k), and (l)  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 BY adding to  
14 Article – Environment  
15 Section 16–105.1  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Environment**

21 16–101.

22 (a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

23 (k) (1) “Pier” means any pier, wharf, dock, walkway, bulkhead, breakwater,  
24 piles, or other similar structure.

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 701 as amended by SB0701/583124/1 02/26/26 at 4:46 PM

1 (2) "Pier" does not include any structure on pilings or stilts that was  
2 originally constructed beyond the landward boundaries of State or private wetlands.

3 (l) (1) "Private wetlands" means any land not considered "State wetland"  
4 bordering on or lying beneath tidal waters, which is subject to regular or periodic tidal  
5 action and supports aquatic growth.

6 (2) "Private wetlands" includes wetlands, transferred by the State by a  
7 valid grant, lease, patent, or grant confirmed by Article 5 of the Maryland Declaration of  
8 Rights, to the extent of the interest transferred.

9 ~~16-105.1.~~

10 (A) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION AND NOTWITHSTANDING  
11 ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THIS TITLE, A PERSON MAY NOT BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN  
12 PERMISSION FROM THE OWNER OF PRIVATE WETLANDS IN ORDER TO CONSTRUCT A  
13 PIER THAT IS:

14 (1) WITHIN THE PRIVATE WETLANDS;

15 (2) CONNECTED TO A PRIVATELY OWNED LIGHTHOUSE LOCATED IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY ON  
BOTTOMLAND OWNED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT; AND

16 (3) NOT CONNECTED TO THE SHORE.

17 (B) A PERSON UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL OBTAIN ALL  
18 NECESSARY APPROVALS FROM THE BOARD AND THE DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO  
19 CONSTRUCTION OF THE PIER.

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
21 October 1, 2026.