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March 30, 2026

Favorable with Amendment: HB 613 Waivers for Living Shorelines and Nonstructural Shoreline Stabilization Measures - Regulations and Scoring Systems

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports the substantial changes made to HB 613 since its introduction. We appreciate the work of the sponsor, Delegate Morgan and the House Environment and Transportation Committee for their work to deliver legislation that addresses concerns and strengthens Maryland's commitment to improving shoreline habitat in the Chesapeake Bay.

As amended, HB 613 codifies an appropriately broad definition of living shoreline to incorporate the many types of shoreline habitats within Maryland's Chesapeake Bay system. Providing this definition will improve regulatory certainty and will make it easier for more waterfront property owners to install living shorelines - a main goal of this regulatory program.

Furthermore, changes made to the bill in the House direct the Maryland Department of the Environment to continue to improve and provide transparency for the waiver process when shorelines are determined inappropriate for living shoreline installations.

Maryland LCV requests a small change in the amended language of the bill. As noted in written testimony from Chesapeake Bay Foundation, we concur that the words "where appropriate" should be added on page 3, line 5 after "engineered structures" to ensure the intent of the bill is clear - to prioritize living shorelines and not to require structural elements if they are not needed.

It is important for Maryland to maintain a commitment to the establishment and maintenance of living shorelines and non structural erosion control along the tidal shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. As amended, this bill achieves that goal.

Maryland LCV urges the committee to accept the proposed amendment and vote for a favorable report for HB 613.