



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

House Bill 1535

Natural Resources – Recreational Fishing – Mobile Reporting Application

Date: March 11, 2026

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**

From: Allison Colden, Ph.D.,
MD Executive Director

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS House Bill 1535** which requires the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop a mobile phone application for the recreational fisheries reporting. It allows DNR to contract with third-party vendors, as needed, to develop the application.

To improve the management of the recreational striped bass fishery, the state's largest recreational fishery, Chapter 587 of 2020 required DNR to conduct a study on methods of obtaining more accurate harvest data. Chapters 409 and 410 of 2022 established a Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License Pilot Program in DNR to collect data regarding individuals fishing under a consolidated Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport boat license. Recognizing the importance of timely, accurate data in managing our state's fisheries, CBF supported both legislative initiatives and tracked the activities of the Task Force and pilot program.

HB 1535 would implement one of the primary recommendations of the Recreational Data Task Force, which is to create an easier, more user-friendly means of reporting recreational fisheries data. These days, most young people and adults have access to a mobile smartphone, and many use it as a primary means of accessing the internet, social media, and even taking photos of prized fish. By engaging anglers where they are likely to be – on their phones – DNR can help improve fisheries data, angler engagement, and reporting compliance to be the benefit of the management of our state fisheries.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 1535.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.