



TESTIMONY FOR HB 0250

Environment – Water Resources and Wetlands – Enforcement

Environment and Transportation Committee

FAVORABLE

TO: Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair; and the Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee; and

FROM: Patrick Crump, member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

DATE: February 2, 2026

Christians have a long history of working to preserve the natural beauty and sustainability of God’s creation. This concern reflects God's mandate to care for the earth, other species placed under our care and influence, and to utilize natural and living resources in a sustainable and unselfish manner.

Wetlands are some of Maryland’s most abundant and valuable natural features. Moreover, the Chesapeake Bay wetlands are some of the most significant wetland areas in the nation. While in the past, wetlands were viewed as mere “wastelands” best used through reclamation projects, most people now recognize the function of wetlands in the environment, and there is significant public support for protecting them, particularly with rising sea levels.

The Supreme Court’s 2023 decision in *Sackett vs EPA* limited the number of wetlands protected under the Clean Water Act, effectively punting the responsibility of wetlands regulation to state, local, and tribal governments. And yet, Maryland’s enforcement of water pollution laws has declined over the last two decades, but especially in the last few years, according to the Chesapeake Accountability Project’s 2022 Scorecard.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland urges the Environment and Transportation Committee to support the Water Resources and Wetlands Enforcement Act, to better enable the Department of the Environment to protect our state’s valuable water resources and wetlands.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network requests a FAVORABLE report.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) is a ministry of The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and The Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA