



Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary

March 3, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein  
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Support – House Bill 843 – Anne Arundel County – Natural Resources – Fishing With a Haul Seine***

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources supports House Bill 843. The bill allows for the limited use of haul seines in Anne Arundel County, explicitly prohibiting the newly authorized gear type in the Severn River.

It is unknown how long the ban on haul seines in Anne Arundel County has been in statute, nor is it known why this ban was put into law in the first place. The department speculates the prohibition is related to user conflict at a time when various beach clubs dominated the County's coastline. Anne Arundel County is the only county to have such a ban.

The department does not foresee any fishery management issues with allowing the use of haul seines in certain county waters beyond the size currently used, as this gear is already in use throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. However, the department is also obligated to ensure the new gear type authorization in HB 843 does not create new user conflicts. We remain open and supportive of amendments to address legitimate concerns from stakeholders.

For the above reasons, the department respectfully requests the committee to grant HB 843 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick  
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services

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