



March 3, 2021

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chairman
House Environmental and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill 843 – Anne Arundel County – Natural Resources – Fishing with a Haul Seine
OPPOSE**

Dear Chairman Barve:

On behalf of the Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM), I am writing in opposition to HB 843. House Bill 843 repeals the prohibition of haul seine nets in certain Anne Arundel County waters.

MTAM works with the Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland to support and protect recreational fishing in Maryland. 744,236 anglers spent \$491 million while fishing in Maryland last year. This economic engine is a huge part of the recreational boating industry.

Our concern is the unknown impacts of the expanded use of haul seines into the rivers and tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay. Our Maryland DNR is typically guided by scientific information as they shape policies that effect our state's natural resources. Ideally, this important work addresses the trade-offs associated with any proposed change in natural resource policy.

Unfortunately, it seems that no such process has been initiated prior to the introduction of HB 843 to address the many questions related to the expanded use of haul seine gear and the species that could be impacted by this proposed change. Why was the gear prohibited in the first place? What is the potential impact to SAV's? Are there any specific locations being targeted and why?

Without a transparent and comprehensive look at how this change will impact our natural resources we see no way to support such a change. We respectfully request an un-favorable vote on House Bill 843.

Sincerely,

Susan Zellers
Executive Director, MTAM

cc: House Environmental and Transportation Committee