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**Testimony encouraging a SUPPORT of House Bill 1006 – State Highway Administration –  
Vegetation Management – Pollinator Habitat Plan**

Environment and Transportation Committee  
March 3, 2023

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT OF HB1006**, on behalf of Arundel Rivers Federation. Arundel Rivers is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection, preservation, and restoration of the South, West and Rhode Rivers with over 3,500 supporters. Our mission is to work with local communities to achieve clean, fishable, and swimmable waterways for present and future generations.

House Bill 1006 will develop a pollinator habitat plan, for the maintenance of vegetated areas along State highways, encouraging the use of pollinator-friendly native plants and providing education and outreach about pollinator-friendly habitats and mowing practices along State highways.

We have seen significant declines in pollinators and other wildlife species, highlighting the need for more native plant species that are critical in the food web and necessary for the survival of pollinator species.<sup>1</sup> Native plant species also provide a benefit to our local water quality. Native plants often have more extensive root systems and require less fertilizer than non-native species, resulting in improved downstream and riparian water quality due to less nutrient loading. Arundel Rivers Federation encourages residents within our watersheds to plant native species through our Bay Loving Landscapes Program. This bill will directly support that program by prioritizing native plant species being properly maintained along state highways – a perfect location for pollinator-friendly plant species.

Arundel Rivers Federation strongly supports expanding and protecting pollinator habitat to improve native plant habitats and local water quality and we respectfully request a **FAVORABLE REPORT on HB1006**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elle Bassett".

Elle Bassett  
South, West and Rhode Riverkeeper  
Arundel Rivers Federation

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Department of Natural Resources. "What's the Buzz: All About Pollinators"  
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/habitat/wawhatsthebuzz.aspx>