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**RECREATIONAL ANGLERS
WORKING TO CONSERVE, PROMOTE, AND ENHANCE MARYLAND'S
MARINE RESOURCES**

February 19th, 2019

To: Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Honorable Shirley Nathan-Pulliam, Vice-Chair
Honorable Members of the Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Committee

Re: Senate Bill 361 – Limited Fishing Guide License – Payment for Service - Alteration

CCA Maryland Position: Support

Coastal Conservation Association Maryland (CCA Maryland) is a state chapter of Coastal Conservation Association, a national nonprofit and the nation's largest organization of saltwater anglers. CCA Maryland is committed to supporting sensible, science-based management practices in support of sustainable fisheries.

Fishing licenses are an important tool for funding the conservation and management of our nations aquatic resources. This model of conservation is one that stems from the very users of the resource themselves, and is key to funding the fish and wildlife agencies like the Maryland Department of Natural Resources(DNR) to maintaining healthy and abundant fisheries resources today and well into the future.

Fishing from charter boats or with guides is a very popular way that many anglers access their resource, and enjoy time on the water. When paying for the services of a charter boat, or a fishing guide, customers are covered by a Bay & Coastal Charterboat license that the charter captain or guide purchases through DNR. There are two different versions of this license, one for up to 6 people at a time, and another for more than 6 people on a single vessel.

A different guide license that this legislation addresses is called the Limited Fishing Guide(L). It allows for the guide to oversee up to 3 vessels propelled by paddle power, or guide groups from shore. At this time, there is no comparable blanket license available to limited fishing guide operators, and therefore these guides must have clients purchase individual licenses before going on a guided trip.

While the purchase of a license by anglers should be celebrated as a way to give back, and support conservation, it is also important that we find was to encourage entry into fishing. Overall participation in fishing throughout the country is increasing, but in Maryland we have seen the opposite of this trend. Guides should be seen as ambassadors for the sport of fishing, and we believe that by providing a blanket license option for guides choosing to

guide clients on small boats, or from shore it will promote fishing as a whole, and support the creation of anglers in the future.

Overall, fishing is a major economic driver in Maryland and throughout the country, and while special fund revenue to DNR is very important, we believe that providing a blanket license to limited guides will provide an overall positive benefit for Maryland as a whole.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 361

For more information on the economics of Sportfishing in America, please visit:

<https://asafishing.org/facts-figures/>