



# Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

## The Sportsmen's Best Friend

March 4, 2022

**THE HONORABLE CRAIG J. ZUCKER**

Chair, Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee  
HONORABLE MEMBERS

**HONORABLE BEN BARNES**

Chair, House Capital Budget Subcommittee  
HONORABLE MEMBERS

**Re: Opposition to DLS Recommendation to Delete Funding for NRP's Helicopter**

Maryland's conservation law enforcement agency – the Natural Resources Police (MNRP) – is in desperate need for its own “eyes in the skies” to timely surveil/apprehend those insular few who would knowingly, willfully, and blatantly violate Maryland's wildlife/fisheries laws. From 1990 through 1995, the MNRP operated with 2 helicopters plus a fixed winged aircraft. Today, those MNRP aircraft are gone. The only time the MNRP can launch an aerial surveillance investigation today is through the courtesy of the Maryland State Police. One can easily imagine the difficulties of such mutual reliance given the increased demands placed both statewide law enforcement agencies, respectively.

MRNP, among other things, is the lead search and rescue operation for the entire Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. This helicopter would be available to respond 24/7 unlike any other law enforcement helicopter in the State which are required by law to respond to transfer injuries.

The policy-related efforts of the bi-partisan Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus to strengthen MNRP's law enforcement functions have received national acclaim by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses. For the record, below is a partial listing of State laws enacted with this intended purpose. Why not give the MNRP the very tool it needs most to enforce these laws?

Conservation Law Enforcement Act of 2010

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2010rs/bills/sb/sb0987t.pdf>

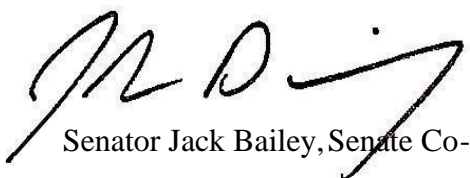
Wildlife Poaching and Prevention Act of 2012

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2012rs/bills/hb/hb1052e.pdf>

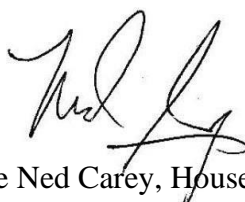
Poaching Restitution Act of 2016

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2016RS/bills/hb/hb0410T.pdf>

**IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS**, the citizenry looks to the MNRP for rigid enforcement of conservation laws intended to protect Maryland's coveted, and finite, fishery/wildlife resources. Concurring with the DLS recommendation would eliminate the much-needed helicopter for the MNRP with predictably resultant conservation-enforcement related consequences. The Caucus respectfully urges both Capital Budget Subcommittees to recommend to their respective full Committees a rejection of the DLS recommendation.



Senator Jack Bailey, Senate Co-Chair



Delegate Ned Carey, House Co -Chair