



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 172

Bay Restoration Fund – Authorized Uses

DATE: JANUARY 29, 2020

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

POSITION

Chesapeake Bay Foundation urges a favorable with amendments report to the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee on SB 172. This legislation would expand the criteria used to determine how to allocate funding from the Bay Restoration Fund Wastewater Account by including climate resiliency and flood control as issues for the Maryland Department of the Environment to consider when determining the priority of funding for specified projects. The bill also adds “volume or quality control” to the types of stormwater control measures for which a local government may receive funding, if the local government has implemented a system of charges to fully fund a stormwater management program.

COMMENTS

The Bay Restoration Fund is Maryland’s premiere dedicated funding source to carry out the State’s commitments to meet the 2025 deadline of nutrient and sediment reductions required under the Chesapeake Bay Blueprint. Much of Maryland’s success in meeting the mid-point assessment goals can be attributed to the upgrading of major wastewater treatment plants to Enhanced Nutrient Removal standards accomplished through support from the Bay Restoration Fund.

As the State nears completion of upgrading all major wastewater treatment plants and undertakes upgrades of minor wastewater treatment plants, the next priorities for funding should be considered in the context of unmet commitments identified in the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan.

While the Chesapeake Bay Foundation acknowledges the value of achieving climate resiliency co-benefits while achieving water quality improvements, the Bay Restoration Fund’s use must not stray from projects whose primary purpose is water quality improvement.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation urges a favorable report on SB 172 with amendments. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Doug Myers, Maryland Senior Scientist at 443.482.2168.

AMENDMENT

On Page 2, strike “VOLUME OR QUALITY CONTROL,” and insert, “STORMWATER MEASURES RELATING TO CLIMATE RESILIENCY OR FLOOD CONTROL”

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