



# CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION

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## Written Testimony

Bill Number/Title: HB 295 / Water Pollution – Stormwater Management Regulations and Watershed Implementation Plans – Review and Update  
Committee: Environmental and Transportation  
Hearing: January 27, 2021  
Position: Support with sponsor amendments

### Background

The Chesapeake Bay Commission is a tri-state legislative commission created by law in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia to advise the members of the three general assemblies on matters of watershed-wide concern. Its fundamental purpose is to assist each assembly to develop legislation and policies that foster the collaborative and practical restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

The Commission has a long history of engagement on policy issues related to the management of stormwater and the development Watershed Implementation Plans, as a signatory to each Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and a member of the Bay Program's Executive Council.

### Position

The Commission supports SB 227 with the amendments proposed by the sponsor. Reductions in pollution from the stormwater is greatly lagging the progress made in other sectors, such as wastewater and agriculture. With rainfall events increasing with climate change, we should not use outdated precipitation data to develop the regulations and policies that are intended to limit the negative impacts of stormwater. By using old data, we are jeopardizing our substantial investments to restore the health of the Chesapeake and our local rivers and streams.

This legislation would require MDE to update and evaluate the precipitation data used to manage stormwater on a regular basis, a reasoned approach to both restore the Chesapeake, and address the severe problems caused by more frequent flooding.

Additionally, the bill codifies the states obligation to incorporate climate change impacts into its Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan and biennial milestones. Although the members of the Chesapeake Bay Program, including Maryland, have committed to this goal, the expressed desire and commitment in law further strengthens Maryland's desire achieve the pollution reductions of the TMDL by 2025. Maryland must continue to lead Bay restoration, as a model for all jurisdictions in the watershed.