



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 395

Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund – Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative –
Use of Proceeds for Maryland Healthy Soils Program

February 20, 2020

CBF POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation **SUPPORTS** HB 395. This legislation would acknowledge the role of healthy soils in sequestration of greenhouse gases by allowing the Maryland Healthy Soils Program to receive funding from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Significant research now supports the approach of increasing soil organic matter and biodiversity to sequester greenhouse gases.¹ Investing revenues from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to soil health programs will help farmers throughout the state increase yields, weather floods and droughts, and accelerate the net reduction of greenhouse gases beyond required regulatory reductions.

This bill states that the greater of 10% or \$1.0 million of the proceeds received by the Strategic Energy Investment Fund from the sale of allowances under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative will be allocated to the Maryland Healthy Soils Program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

CBF has been a leader in soil health education and technology transfer allowing farmers to learn new techniques, work with CBF and University of Maryland scientists to collect and interpret data from their fields and develop outreach presentations to the agriculture community through the Buy Fresh, Buy Local annual conferences. CBF is working with Maryland Department of Agriculture in the development of their Soil Health Program by sharing expertise, farmer contacts and identifying outreach strategies for broader adoption of soil health practices in Maryland.

For these reasons, CBF urges a FAVORABLE report on HB 395 from the House Economic Matters Committee. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Doug Myers, Maryland Senior Scientist at (443)-482-2168 or dmyers@cbf.org.

¹ *Soil carbon sequestration potential of US croplands and grasslands: Implementing the 4 per Thousand Initiative*; Adam Chambers, Rattan Lal, and Keith Paustian; doi:10.2489/jswc.71.3.68A, available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/050f/2ee0e6387727c8652ac1ee23b470a71d577e.pdf>

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