



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

January 29, 2020

Committee: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

Bill: SB 172 – Bay Restoration Fund – Authorized Uses

Position: Support

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports SB 172. This legislation This bill expands the criteria used to determine how to allocate funding from the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) Wastewater Account by including climate resiliency and flood control as issues for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) 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 that a local government can receive BRF funding for if the local government has implemented a system of charges to fully fund a stormwater management program.

The Maryland Municipal League was very involved in the crafting and passage of the Bay Restoration Fund legislation when it was established in 2004. When the fund was originally structured, it was intended to finance upgrades to the State’s 67 major wastewater treatment plants, upgrade septic systems, and finance cover crop activities. Sixteen years later, most of the major wastewater treatment plant upgrades are completed, and the fund is now financing many “major-minor” municipal wastewater plant upgrades as well.

In our view, stormwater management and climate resiliency activities are becoming more necessary by the day. Many municipalities struggle to finance stormwater infrastructure upgrades to alleviate flooding and better manage stormwater runoff. In addition, the impact of sea level rise and other climate related impacts are just now being felt across the State. The ability to use this funding to address these concerns would be of benefit to Maryland’s cities and towns.

MML would respectfully request that this committee provide SB 172 with a favorable report.

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