



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 1033

Environment and Energy - Investment in Overburdened Communities

Date: March 15, 2022

Position: Support

To: Appropriations and Economic Matters

From: Josh Kurtz, Maryland Executive Director

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS HB 1033**. This bill requires the Department of the Environment to develop policies and recommendations to require at least 40% of overall spending on certain programs, projects, or investments to benefit overburdened communities, and defines an "overburdened community" as any census tract where the median household income is not more than 75% of the statewide median household income and certain environmental indicators are above the 75th percentile.

Environmental Justice Considerations Should Be Incorporated into Spending Decisions

Everyone deserves clean water, clean air, and a safe environment. Environmental justice refers to the effort to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized communities, such as low-income and/or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities, aren't disproportionately harmed by pollution and the singular or cumulative impacts of environmental burdens. By requiring a set proportion of the funds to these communities we can guarantee that they will not be passed over for future resources. These investments will help stop persistent pollution challenges facing residents and waterways in these areas.

HB 1033 aligns with Federal Justice40 requirements to further increase resources

This legislation aligns with the federal Justice40 program¹, which will assist in getting greater amounts of federal funding to overburdened communities on top of state expenditures. This program recognizes the disproportionate impacts that overburdened communities face from the impacts of climate change and pollution, and coordinates funding to correct those issues.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 1033. For more information, please contact Robin Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at rclark@cbf.org and 443.995.8753.

¹ The White House. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2021/07/20/the-path-to-achieving-justice40/> last visited 3.11.22
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