



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 607 – Water Pollution Control – Discharge Permits  
– Stormwater Associated With Construction Activity**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Members of ENT:

This Committee spends a lot of time working to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. Each year we have multiple bills addressing the health of the Bay. We recently had a briefing on the Bay and heard that the Bay continues to struggle with excess amounts nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment.

The Committee might be surprised to learn, then, that it is currently not unlawful to allow massive amounts of pollution to run off a construction site. Let me say that again. It is not unlawful to allow massive amounts of pollution to run off a construction site. How many of us have seen polluted water run off a construction site or in the water downriver from a construction site? I know I have.

According to the EPA, sediment runoff from construction sites are typically 10 – 20 times greater than agricultural lands, and 1,000-2,000 times greater than forested lands. Even a short burst of rain “can contribute more sediment to streams than would be deposited naturally over several decades.”<sup>1</sup> These quick bursts of rain create mud-filled water running off a construction site that can destroy a stream and aquatic ecosystem. The cost to repair the damaged streams or dredge the sediment-filled creeks or fight the sediment levels in the Chesapeake Bay is currently borne by the taxpayers to the tune of hundreds of millions, if not billions.

HB 607 addresses the problem of this runoff from construction sites. It:

1. Clarifies that a construction site may not cause sediment pollution or erosion downstream;
2. Gives inspectors the tools they need to investigate downstream waters following pollution complaints;
3. Requires more rigorous grading and construction permit review for larger construction sites in sensitive areas; and
4. Establishes penalties for non-permitted construction activities.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 607.

---

<sup>1</sup> Stormwater Phase II Final Rule: Construction Site Runoff Control Minimum Control Measure. US EPA. 2018. pg. 2. available at: [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/documents/epa\\_stormwater\\_phase\\_ii\\_final\\_rule\\_factsheet\\_2.6\\_construction\\_runoff\\_12-04-18.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/documents/epa_stormwater_phase_ii_final_rule_factsheet_2.6_construction_runoff_12-04-18.pdf).