

March 5, 2023

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair, and
The Honorable Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair
Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB969 Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Committee,

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for SB969, the Whole Watersheds Act, as written.

We appreciate the diligent work of the bill's lead sponsor, Senator Elfreth, in establishing a work group many of us participated in to develop this legislation. As environmental advocates, scientists, practitioners, and restoration experts, we believe that this bill will support efforts to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay and generally advance environmental progress.

In particular, we appreciate how the bill will identify targeted watersheds then empower state agencies and various funding sources to coordinate in rapidly removing those waterways from the impaired streams list. The bill also creates strong licensing requirements to prevent inexperienced actors from engaging in what deserve to be professional efforts to improve sensitive riparian ecosystems.

Our organizations have firsthand experience with stream restoration as one of the most effective techniques to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution while creating wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for all Marylanders. We would oppose the bill if amended by the addition of unscientific restrictions on and duplicative requirements for restoring streams. Legislators should aim to make it easier to improve the environment, not harder.

We encourage you to support SB969 as written, without anti-stream amendments.

Sincerely,

GreenVest



Ecosystem Investment Partners



**Ecosystem
Investment
Partners**

Environmental Policy Innovation Center



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
INNOVATION
CENTER

Environmental Quality Resources



ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY RESOURCES

Resource Environmental Solutions

