



TOWN OF HANCOCK, MARYLAND
126 W. High St., Hancock, MD 21750



February 20, 2024

Subject: Support for Senate Bill 726 - Bay Restoration Fund - Authorized Uses - Decommissioning of Wastewater Treatment Lagoon

Dear Honorable Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Town of Hancock, I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill 726, which proposes an essential amendment to the authorized uses of the Bay Restoration Fund. This amendment, to include the costs related to the decommissioning of certain wastewater treatment lagoons beginning in fiscal year 2026, represents a critical step forward in our collective efforts to support small communities like ours.

The Town of Hancock, like many small municipalities across the state, faces significant challenges in meeting the stringent state regulations regarding wastewater effluence. Our current lagoon system, while functional, does not align with the environmental standards necessary to ensure the long-term health and safety of our waterways, particularly the Chesapeake Bay.

The transition from our existing lagoon system to an Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) system is not only a regulatory necessity but an environmental imperative. However, the financial implications of such a project are staggering. With an estimated total project cost of approximately \$30,000,000 and a connection base of around 800 households, the economic burden on our citizens without state support would be insurmountable. The per-household cost would be far beyond the means of our residents, many of whom are already stretched thin financially.

Senate Bill 726 presents a viable solution to this dilemma by allowing the use of the Bay Restoration Fund for projects like ours. Decommissioning outdated and environmentally harmful lagoon systems is an expensive endeavor, but it is a critical component of our broader efforts to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay.

We urge the committee to recognize the importance of this bill not only for the Town of Hancock but for all small communities facing similar challenges. Your support for Senate Bill 726 will provide much-needed financial relief and ensure that we can continue to take decisive action in safeguarding our environment for future generations.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We are committed to working collaboratively with the state and other stakeholders to achieve our shared environmental goals and are hopeful for your support of Senate Bill 726.

Sincerely,

_____, Hancock, MD
www.townofhancock.org (301) 678-5622



TOWN OF HANCOCK, MARYLAND
126 W. High St., Hancock, MD 21750



Michael Faith, Town Manager