CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

Senate Bill 932

Maryland Agricultural BMP Best in Show Program – Established

Date:	March 8, 2024	Position:	**Favorable With Amendment**
To:	Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee	From:	Doug Myers
			Maryland Senior Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS SB 932 with amendments offered by the sponsor.** The bill targets $5 Million from existing fund sources to maximize the effectiveness of multiple agricultural best management practices to where they will have the most benefit for water quality and other ecosystem services.

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee recently released a report entitled Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR) which critically evaluated the effectiveness of agricultural Best Management Practices as insufficient to address pollutant loading to the Bay. SB 932 addresses the CESR recommendations on focusing investments to shallow water areas that are likely to show a more rapid response and be more visible to human populations. CBF, Shore Rivers, and other partners have been working with Department of Agriculture to accomplish these goals through administrative means but SB 932 provides needed emphasis and funding clarification that a targeted approach is required.

SB 932 will support urban agriculture and underserved communities by allocating resources towards implementing Best Management Practices, which are vital for improving environmental quality and reducing pollution in urban areas. By prioritizing BMPs, such as vegetative buffers and urban stormwater management systems, SB 932 will enhance the health and resilience of these communities while addressing environmental challenges and injustices effectively.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT report on SB 932.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.