



FAVORABLE - HB245
Department of Environment - Fees, Penalties, Funding, and Regulation

Maryland Department of Emergency Management
Environment and Transportation
Hearing Date: 31 JAN 2024

Chairman Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chairman Korman,

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes **in support of HB245 - Department of Environment - Fees, Penalties, Funding, and Regulation.**

The bill establishes a private dam repair fund and loan program to provide a dedicated funding source for owners of private dams classified as high or significant hazard dams determined to be unsafe by the Department.

MDEM and MDE work closely on dam safety and risk mitigation at the State level, and we strongly support MDE's strategy for creating a mechanism that will support high and significant dam hazard risk mitigation. The fees assessed and creation of the dedicated Private Dam Repair Fund and Loan Program will ensure a source of financial assistance for dams posing risk to life safety and property across the State. It will align with identified mitigation strategies to prioritize high hazard potential dams and provide owners assistance for dam repairs outlined in the MDE and MDEM 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan for Dams (Appendix C of the 2021 [Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), p. 12).

Dams are an identified hazard in the Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021). Hazard classifications for dams are based solely on the downstream damage that would result if the dam were to fail. High and significant hazard dams pose risks that include potential loss of life and flooding to homes, roads, and businesses. Maryland



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Russell J. Strickland | Secretary

has had a number of dam failures in recent history. For example, in 2016, the privately-owned Barren Creek Dam washed out after a historic rain event and severed a county throughway, resulting in \$4M in damages. The Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies future damage from dam failure as a high probability, particularly as climate change increases the frequency and intensity of rainfall events.

In conclusion, MDEM urges a favorable report of HB245 - Department of the Environment - Fees, Penalties, Funding, and Regulation.

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Sierra, MDEM legislative liaison:
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