



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 1511

Forest Conservation Act – Modifications

Date: March 12, 2024	Position: Favorable
To: House Environment and Transportation Committee	From: Matt Stegman Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS HB 1511**, which would require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to update model forest conservation ordinances for local governments by July 1, 2025 and adopt regulations to enforce the Forest Conservation Act by July 1, 2026. The bill also delays the effective date of several provisions of the comprehensive Forest Conservation Act (FCA) update enacted last year.

Ch. 541 passed during the 2023 session updated the state's forest preservation goals while providing new flexibility and tools for local governments and land developers to protect and enhance Maryland's woodlands. This was the first significant update to the FCA since its adoption in 1991. While the urgency to enhance forest protections remains, it is also important that local governments have the appropriate guidance. HB 1511 takes a balanced approach between implementing FCA updates in a timely manner and taking a pause on certain provisions to get implementation right.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE Report on HB 1511.

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

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.