

JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*



JENNIFER AIOSA  
*Director of Government Affairs*

AMANDA KONTZ CARR  
*Legislative Officer*

WILLIAM J. THORNE  
*Legislative Associate*

**BILL NO.: HB 655**

**TITLE:** Environment – State Wetlands – Shoreline Stabilization Measures

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Stein

**COMMITTEE:** Environment and Transportation

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

**DATE:** February 21, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 655 – Environment – State Wetlands – Shoreline Stabilization Measures, which bars the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from exempting a person from the requirement of incorporation non-structural shoreline stabilization practice, if the exemption would be solely on the basis of replacing structural shoreline stabilizations with the same or similar type of structural measure.

HB 655 aims to move shoreline stabilization measures to be increasing non-structural. Baltimore County notes that sometimes structural stabilizations are appropriate. For example, Baltimore County has many narrow waterfront parcels. It is not always feasible for residential waterfront property owners with narrow lots to replace a bulkhead barrier with a non-structural shoreline without impacting the adjacent property owners' barrier negatively. The piecemeal replacement, that this bill is intended to incentivize, could result in flank erosion of adjacent properties, flooding, standing water, and potentially compromise wells, septic systems, and the foundation of homes in low elevation areas. The resulting erosion alone might end up being a net-negative impact on water quality. Baltimore County would like to request an amendment requiring the MDE to issue regulations and technical guidance on when like-for-like structural shoreline practices may be appropriate or not. This will reduce the burden of proof laid on individual property owners and allow for a more uniform application of the proposed rule

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 655 from the House Environment and Transportation committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).