

Support for HB 1284
Environment and Transportation Committee

Dear Delegates Terrasa, Lehman, and Ruth:

As a concerned citizen of Maryland, I am writing to express my support for the Wetlands and Waterways Program - Stream Restoration Projects bill. I first learned about the terrible damage to waterways in Howard County during my Environmental Science G/T Seminar at Burleigh Manor Middle School, and I now strongly feel that stream restorations are wrong and really hurt the environment around us.

From research, I have learned that these stream restoration projects are actually really harmful to the environment. They affect people downstream, they destroy habitats by tearing down the mature trees and replacing them with young ones. The stream's banks then destabilize because there aren't any roots to hold onto the bank, causing mud, dirt, and silt to flow downstream, polluting the water. In an article published by the Baltimore Banner it states, "To remove a mature tree and to replace it with a sapling, or a seedling, is at least 50 years, maybe 100 years, of lost benefits that the mature trees provide." An article by the University of Georgia said that it seems that reshaping the river, even to make it more natural, rarely helps the factors limiting fish diversity and abundance in the streams that are chosen for restoration.

I am pleased that HB 1284 prohibits trees 2 inches in caliper from being removed from the banks of the streams. I support the repeal of the exemption of application fees for certain stream restorations and produce a little funding for MDE. Finally, I am pleased this bill requires the expansion of the community engagement process by increasing the notification boundaries, expanding the mandatory public comment period to 60 days, requiring two virtual public hearings on every project and requiring signage for all projects on all four sides of a project with clear contact information. Concerned citizens need time to understand stream restoration proposals and take action against them.

On behalf of the children of Maryland, who will inherit the environment you leave for us, I support HB 1284.

Signed,
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