SENATE BILL 118

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By: Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee (By Request – Departmental – Agriculture)

Introduced and read first time: January 18, 2012 Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Committee Report: Favorable Senate action: Adopted Read second time: February 14, 2012

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 Voluntary Agricultural Nutrient and Sediment Credit Certification Program

- 3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the State Department of Agriculture to establish 4 requirements for the voluntary certification and registration of sediment credits $\mathbf{5}$ on agricultural land under the Voluntary Agricultural Nutrient Credit 6 Certification Program; clarifying the authority of the Department of the 7Environment to establish eligibility and other requirements for use of sediment 8 offset credits under any State or federal permit or other regulatory program; 9 altering the intent of the General Assembly; and generally relating to the 10 establishment of voluntary agricultural sediment credit certification and 11 registration requirements.
- 12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
- 13 Article Agriculture
- 14 Section 8–901, 8–902, and 8–904 to be under the amended subtitle "Subtitle 9.
- Voluntary Agricultural Nutrient and Sediment Credit Certification
 Program"
- 17 Annotated Code of Maryland
- 18 (2007 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)
- 19 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
- 20 Article Agriculture
- 21 Section 8–903
- 22 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

<u>Underlining</u> indicates amendments to bill.

Strike out indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



	2 SENATE BILL 118
1	(2007 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)
$2 \\ 3 \\ 4$	BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments, Chapter 447 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2010 Section 2
5 6 7	BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments, Chapter 447 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2010 Section 3
8 9	SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:
10	Article – Agriculture
$\begin{array}{c} 11 \\ 12 \end{array}$	Subtitle 9. Voluntary Agricultural Nutrient AND SEDIMENT Credit Certification Program.
13	8–901.
14	The General Assembly finds and declares that:
$\begin{array}{c} 15\\ 16\\ 17\end{array}$	(1) Voluntary nutrient AND SEDIMENT trading programs provide an innovative and cost–effective approach to enhance water and air quality and achieve additional water and air quality benefits; and
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	(2) The Agricultural Nutrient AND SEDIMENT Credit Certification Program established under this subtitle authorizes the Department to verify, certify, and register agricultural nutrient OR SEDIMENT credits in support of private and public nutrient OR SEDIMENT trading activities between the buyer of nutrient OR SEDIMENT credits and the farm owner or operator that agrees to be paid and implement best management practices to reduce agricultural nutrient AND SEDIMENT runoff and NUTRIENT emissions.
25	8–902.
26 27 28	(a) The Department may establish requirements for the voluntary certification and registration of nutrient OR SEDIMENT credits on agricultural land, as defined by the Department of Assessments and Taxation.
29 30	(b) Certification and registration requirements established under subsection (a) of this section shall include:
31	(1) Application and eligibility requirements for certification;

SENATE BILL 118

1 (2)Standards for quantifying nutrient OR SEDIMENT credits $\mathbf{2}$ resulting from any existing or proposed agronomic, land use, and structural practice; 3 Requirements governing the duration and maintenance of credits: (3)and 4 Establishment of a credit registry accessible to the public. $\mathbf{5}$ (4) 6 8-903. 7On notice and opportunity to be heard, the Secretary may suspend or revoke the 8 approval or certification of credits applicable for the Program for a violation of this 9 subtitle or for a violation of any regulation adopted by the Secretary under this subtitle. 10 11 8-904. Nothing in this subtitle is intended to supplant or limit the authority of the 1213Department of the Environment to establish eligibility and other requirements for use 14of nutrient OR SEDIMENT offset credits under any State or federal permit or other 15regulatory program. 16 Chapter 447 of the Acts of 2010 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the provisions of this Act 17may not be construed to affect the rights and obligations of any party to any 18 agreement to preserve land for agricultural use under any State, local, or private 1920program for the preservation of agricultural land. SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That it is the intent of the 2122General Assembly that the authority of the State Department of Agriculture to 23establish requirements for the voluntary certification and registration of nutrient OR 24SEDIMENT credits on agricultural land, as provided by this Act, be retained by the 25State Department of Agriculture. SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect 2627June 1, 2012.