



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 152

Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2020

DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020

POSITION: OPPOSE PROPOSED \$25 MILLION CUT TO BAY RESTORATION FUND

POSITION

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) recommends that the House Appropriations Committee reject DLS's proposed \$25 million cut to the Bay Restoration Fund when considering the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2020 (BRFA). With the 2025 deadline for restoring the Chesapeake Bay fast approaching, now is not the time to be diverting funds from the Bay Restoration Fund for purposes that do not directly improve water quality.

COMMENTS

Maryland established the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) in 2004 in order to address the excessive amount of nutrient pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay causing a steady decline in water quality. Throughout Maryland, households and businesses pay into the BRF with an expectation that the State uses these funds to address pollution coming from wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, agriculture and, to limited extent, urban & suburban runoff. It would be a betrayal of the public trust to accept the DLS recommendation to take from the BRF for a purpose that does not provide a direct water quality benefit to local waters and the Chesapeake Bay.

Since the establishment of Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint in 2010, Maryland has been a leader when it comes to efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay. The pollution reductions to date have largely come from the upgrades to waste water treatment plants funded through the BRF. In its final cleanup plan before 2025, the State is relying on additional reductions from this sector and the funding from the BRF to meet its pollution reduction requirements.

At this critical juncture in Bay cleanup efforts, we cannot afford to slow down the pace of projects that the BRF funds. In fact, we need to be accelerating our efforts. To divert funding from the BRF at this critical juncture is shortsighted and will put Maryland at risk of falling behind on its clean water commitments.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation recommends that the Appropriations Committee reject the \$25 million fund diversion from the Bay Restoration Fund proposed by DLS. Please contact Alison Prost at 410-268-8816 or aprost@cbf.org with any questions.

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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 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 107,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.