



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 177

Environment - Water Infrastructure Assets - Authorization of Emergency Actions and Establishment of Emergency Reserve

DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 2020

POSITION: OPPOSE

POSITION

Chesapeake Bay Foundation opposes HB 177 because of its use of the Bay Restoration Fund as a funding source for bonding the removal of priority dams deemed at imminent risk of collapse resulting in loss of life, property or damage to the environment.

COMMENTS

While the threat of collapse of certain dams creates both human health and environmental risks, the Bay Restoration Fund should not necessarily be the source of bonding authority to address this concern. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation recommends that the Bay Restoration Fund Advisory Committee and key legislators convene to discuss the objectives for Bay Restoration Funding following the completion of major wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

The Watershed Implementation Plan Phase III includes commitments to advise funding priorities. Broadening the scope of the Bay Restoration Fund without consideration of the Phase III goals creates concerning precedent. A process for consideration of this need that includes the Bay Restoration Fund Advisory Committee would provide reasonable assurance for continuing commitments already made through the Watershed Implementation Plans.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, CBF urges an unfavorable report on HB 177. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Doug Myers, Maryland Senior Scientist at (443)-482-2168 or dmyers@cbf.org

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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.