



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1080 - COAST SMART SITING AND DESIGN CRITERIA – PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION OR RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

ShoreRivers and the undersigned organizations respectfully request a **favorable report** from the Environment and Transportation Committee on House Bill 1080, to be heard 2/28.

HB1080 requires developers to consider sea level rise in their planning and development. 23,000 properties in Maryland are at risk from tidal flooding and according to experts, sea level rise in Maryland is speeding up. Since 1950 water levels have increased 10 inches, whereas predictions out to year 2050 estimate an additional 1.6 feet of rise. The increased rate of sea level rise is due to the compound effect of land sinking which makes local solutions complicated and costly.

HB1080 encourages responsible development in areas sensitive to sea level rise. According to the National Institute of Building Science, every \$1 spent on mitigations efforts saves \$6 in future disaster costs. Investing in proper design and siting criteria upfront is a smart approach to reducing future risks while also protecting local governments from the liability of inadequately built structures impacted by sea level rise.

HB1080 builds upon and compliments existing laws. In 2014 the Maryland legislature passed a law to establish the Coast Smart Council for the purpose of adopting specific siting and design criteria to address impacts associated with sea level rise and coastal flooding on future capital projects. In 2018 the legislature passed another law to expand the scope of the Coast Smart Council to apply the criteria to any state and local project for which at least 50% of the project costs are funded with state funds. And then finally in 2019 the legislature passed a third law requiring counties impacted by nuisance flooding to develop a nuisance flooding plan. **HB1080 builds on this pathway towards resilience planning by requiring any development within an area subject to sea level rise or tidal flooding to incorporate the Coast Smart siting and design criteria.**

Maryland is said to be the third most prone area in the Country to sea level rise behind Florida and Louisiana. Measures like these depicted in HB1080 are critical to prevent flooding impacts and other future hazards on newly built structures. *Development in these sensitive areas need to be done responsibly, need to be sustainable, and need to consider the impacts of sea level rise.*

For these reasons, the undersigned organizations urge the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB1080**. Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Assateague Coastal Trust

Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group

CCAN Action Fund

Center for Progressive Reform

Chesapeake Legal Alliance

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Clean Water Action

Corsica River Conservancy

Friends of Lower Beaverdam Creek

Gunpowder Riverkeeper

Little Falls Watershed Alliance

Maryland Sierra Club

Mattawoman Watershed Society

Potomac Riverkeeper Network

Queen Anne's Conservation Association

ShoreRivers

St Mary's River Watershed Association

Waterkeepers Chesapeake

Wicomico Environmental Trust