



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 467

Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Hydroelectric Power

Date: February 4, 2021

To: House Economic Matters Committee

Position: **Support**

Contact: Doug Myers, dmyers@cbf.org

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS HB 467** which freezes hydropower at 2.5% of the current Renewable Portfolio Standard mix through time as wind and solar become a larger percent of the mix.

This legislation is a prudent approach in transitioning the energy portfolio so that any reliance Maryland currently has on hydropower for electricity generation now won't be lost as new technology is developed and deployed.

CBF remains concerned that large scale hydropower generation facilities, while renewable, tend to come with unintended consequences such as the blockage of upstream fish migration leading to diminished populations of those species over time. Dams also cause unnatural capture and storage of bedload sediments while continuing to bypass nutrient pollution in dissolved form. This creates a dynamic where the scouring of bedload sediments following storm events delivers additional pulses of nutrients that can create phytoplankton blooms leading to depressed dissolved oxygen in the Bay.

Finally, as climate warms, hydropower reservoirs heat up and evaporate more than rivers. This dynamic has the potential to exacerbate water shortages during drought conditions and may stress sensitive species of fish. CBF appreciates the pragmatic approach this legislation provides to transitioning our energy portfolio while incentivizing more renewable power and the jobs that will emerge through an energy transition responsive to the climate crisis.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 467.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403
Phone (410) 268-8816 • Fax (410) 280-3513

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 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.