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Enhancing and Advancing Land Conservation

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Date: January 25, 2021

Bill Number: SB 119 - Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021

Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Position: Support

The Forever Maryland Foundation supports, **SB 119 - Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021** for the purpose of establishing the Clean Water Commerce Fund and enhancing the outcomes of Maryland's Bay Restoration Fund.

The bill, as drafted, authorizes the creation of the Clean Water Commerce Fund and mandates an annual transfer of \$20,000,000 from the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) to the fund, to be used for activities to decrease Nitrogen, Phosphorous or sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. This bill would specify that any unencumbered balance in excess of \$20,000,000 would stay within the BRF and that the allotted funds would have a minimum disbursement of 35% to agricultural projects, 20% to disadvantaged communities impacted by environmental justice issues, and at least 10% to non-agricultural landscape restoration.

This bill states that all projects funded under the Clean Water Commerce Fund would be tied to and tracked for Chesapeake Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) water quality outcomes. Funds shall not be provided for existing or currently mandated Federal, State, or local projects.

The Forever Maryland Foundation is dedicated to the conservation of our state's land, water, wildlife, and other natural values. If further information is requested, please contact the organization's Program and Policy Director, Josh Hastings, at 443-640-1034 Ex. 1267 or Josh@ForeverMaryland.org.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

We respectfully request a favorable report.

FOREVER MARYLAND FOUNDATION

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