



# CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION

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## Written Testimony

Bill Number/Title: HB 583 / Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021  
Committee: Environmental and Transportation  
Hearing: February 11, 2021  
Position: Favorable

### Background

The Chesapeake Bay Commission is a tri-state legislative commission created by law in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia to advise the members of the three general assemblies on matters of watershed-wide concern. Its fundamental purpose is to assist each assembly to develop legislation and policies that foster the collaborative and practical restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

### Position

The Commission supports HB 583. The impacts of climate change continue to increase the challenge of restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The Chesapeake Bay Program models currently project that nitrogen loading will increase Bay-wide by approximately 6 million pounds annually due to climate change looking out to the TMDL deadline in 2025. For Maryland, this translates to 1.14 million pounds *above and beyond* the 6.2-million-pound reduction already required to achieve clean water. These impacts are projected to increase over time post-2025. Each jurisdiction must work to incorporate additional conservation practices into their two-year workplans to address the additive loads due to climate change.

HB 583 also includes specific provisions to increase urban and rural tree planting. Reforestation, forest buffers and urban tree canopy all offer cost-effective opportunities to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution for each sector. Forested landscapes produce the lowest nutrient loading of any cover type within the Bay watershed; by increasing the number of trees and forest cover, dual benefits can be achieved – carbon sequestration and the reduction of nutrient loading to the Bay.