



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## Senate Bill 383

Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education Grant - Funding and Evaluation - Extension

Date: February 8, 2022

Position: **Support**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

From: Josh Kurtz, MD Executive Director

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 383, which extends funding for the Green Schools Program until 2028. The program provides K-12 students with educational opportunities that empower them to make changes to reduce environmental impact, practice environmental stewardship, encourage sustainability, increase awareness of how our relationship with the environment ultimately impacts public health and society and fosters environmental literacy.

### **Education of our next generation is critical to restoring the Bay and protecting it in the future.**

A core tenant of the CBF's work is educating students about the Bay and the broader environment through hands on learning experiences. The Maryland Green Schools Program has a similar mission. The program is focused on teaching students how they can improve the environment, protect the Bay, and tackle climate change. The program was created in alignment with the Chesapeake Bay Agreement of 2014 and provides enriching, hands-on, inquiry-based learning for Maryland students across the state.

### **The program is extremely popular and the extension of the funding will allow for more students to be able to access the program.**

Currently 42% of all public schools in Maryland hold green schools' status and nearly 430,000 Maryland students are served by the program<sup>1</sup>. Students in these schools are given the opportunity to learn about and participate in activities including recycling, restoring natural habitats, and reducing energy consumption. The lessons learned by the students are one that could be applied at home and in their own communities. The current program has a goal of reaching 50% of all schools across the state. The extension of the program will provide additional resources to reaching that goal.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 383.** For more information, please contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [rclark@cbf.org](mailto:rclark@cbf.org) and 443.995.8753.

<sup>1</sup> Maryland Green Schools Progress Evaluation, Executive Summary

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hVw8JyrrfD4mpGhCOCdTMVs-CdvuyCB-/view>

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