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**SB528: Environment -
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
January 28th, 2021
Betsy Nicholas, Waterkeepers Chesapeake**

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Waterkeepers Chesapeake fights for clean water and a healthy environment by supporting Waterkeepers throughout the Chesapeake and coastal regions as they protect their communities, rivers, and streams from pollution. Waterkeepers Chesapeake has 17 Waterkeeper program members, representing thousands of residents in Maryland and the region.

We commend Senator Pinsky for his leadership and introduction of such an ambitious and comprehensive legislation proposal to combat climate change before the Maryland General Assembly. Specifically, we support the policies in SB 528 to address the cumulative impacts of pollution on communities who already are overburdened with existing industrial facilities, most often our black and brown communities. The addition of a tool designed by the University of Maryland to identify existing sources of pollution, called the Maryland EJ Screen, could give regulators and residents critical additional data points when making permitting decisions for new sources of pollution.

Thus, in addition to the testimony from the Climate Partners, to which we signed, we have one additional amendment request. Incorporate the intent and language below from SB 818 into page 22, lines 12 to 15:

(A) A PERSON APPLYING FOR A PERMIT UNDER THIS ARTICLE SHALL INCLUDE IN THE PERMIT APPLICATION THE EJ SCORE FROM THE MARYLAND EJSCREEN MAPPING TOOL FOR THE ADDRESS WHERE THE APPLICANT IS SEEKING A PERMIT.

(B) (1) ON RECEIVING A PERMIT APPLICATION UNDER THIS ARTICLE, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SECTION, CONDUCT AN ANALYSIS OF THE ADDRESS WHERE THE APPLICANT IS SEEKING A PERMIT USING THE MARYLAND EJSCREEN MAPPING TOOL.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONDUCT THE ANALYSIS REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION BEFORE DECIDING WHETHER TO ISSUE A PERMIT UNDER THIS ARTICLE.

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Waterkeepers Chesapeake urges a favorable report with this amendment.

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