# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration*
*Environmental Education*

**House Bill 1021**

Products That Contain Mercury – Fluorescent Lamps – Prohibition

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| Date: | March 8, 2023 | Position: | Support |
| To: | House Economic Matters Committee | From: | Doug Myers |
| | | | Maryland Senior Scientist |

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 1021 which phases out the sale of new fluorescent lamps containing mercury.

HB 1021 acknowledges the danger of mercury emissions from both the human health and environmental standpoint and seeks to limit mercury exposure through the solid waste management pathway, especially leading to combustion which volatilizes mercury into the atmosphere where its fallout can contaminate large areas.

Nearly half of all gamefish in freshwater lakes, streams and rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed may be unsafe to eat because of high levels of mercury, a new study suggests. In the first study to examine mercury across a spectrum of fish in the six-state region, scientists found that the pollutant remains prevalent in the environment in its most toxic form despite years of declining mercury emissions[1].

The bill also realizes there are certain applications and businesses that rely on specialized lighting where there is currently no alternative to mercury based fluorescent lamps and exempts those from the sales prohibition.  This reasonable approach to reducing potential environmental exposure to mercury begins to make progress for a cleaner environment.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 1021.**

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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[1] Willacker JJ, Eagles-Smith CA, Blazer VS. Mercury bioaccumulation in freshwater fishes of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Ecotoxicology. 2020 May;29(4):459-484. doi: 10.1007/s10646-020-02193-5. Epub 2020 Apr 1. Erratum in: Ecotoxicology. 2021 Jul;30(5):1004-1005. PMID: 32239332.