



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 392

Wastewater Facility Supplemental Operations and Maintenance Grant Program – Establishment

Date: February 15, 2023	Position: Support
To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Budget & Tax Committee	From: Matt Stegman Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 392 which establishes the Wastewater Facility Supplemental Operations and Maintenance Grant Program to provide competitive grants for publicly owned wastewater facilities facing operations and maintenance challenges. The bill directs the Governor to include an annual \$10 million appropriation for the program beginning in Fiscal Year 2025.

The recent failures of the state's two largest wastewater treatment plants have demonstrated the tremendous need for additional investment in our wastewater infrastructure. Resources for staff training and retention, coupled with adequate maintenance funding are necessary to bring these systems back to 21st century operations. Further, the bill prioritizes equity by ensuring plants with the greatest need and those serving the highest proportion of low-income user receive preferential consideration.

Critically, this bill specifies that any grants and grant funding provided under this program are above and beyond any operations and maintenance grants made through the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF). This is a recognition both of the acute needs at our largest wastewater treatment plants and a general concern to not oversubscribe the BRF.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 392.

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

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.