



February 23, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 813 - Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Environmental Justice Funding**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or the Department) has reviewed Senate Bill 813 and would like to provide the following information and proposed amendments. MDE has been working with the Senate sponsor on this legislation and appreciates the consideration of the Department's amendments.

Senate Bill 813 would require the Governor to include in the annual State budget, an appropriation for the comprehensive flood management grant program of at least \$20,000,000 each fiscal year starting in fiscal year (FY) 2025. Additionally, the bill would require that at least 40% of the funding in each FY (minimum \$8,000,000) be provided under the program be used for projects located in or directly benefiting census tracts with an Environmental Justice (EJ) Score of .76 or greater, as identified using the Maryland EJ Tool.

Amendment:

Through the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 (CSNA), MDE was provided a definition of "overburdened" and "underserved." In order to be consistent with the CSNA, MDE would like to substitute EJ Score and Maryland EJ Tool with overburdened OR underserved within the language. MDE spoke with the sponsor's office and they agreed to the mentioned amendments.

**These amendments would include striking (e) and (j) on Page 2 and inserting the definitions of overburdened and underserved per CSNA. Additionally on Page 5, strike "OR DIRECTLY BENEFITING CENSUS TRACTS WITH AN EJ SCORE OF .76 OR GREATER, AS IDENTIFIED USING THE MARYLAND EJ TOOL" and insert, "AN OVERBURDENED OR UNDERSERVED AREA."**

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor SB 813 during the Committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-453-3235 or by e-mail at [gabrielle.leach@maryland.gov](mailto:gabrielle.leach@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Gabriele Leach".

Gabriele Leach  
Deputy Director, Legislative and Intergovernmental Relations

Cc: The Honorable Alonzo Washington