



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

T E S T I M O N Y

March 3, 2023

Committee: Environment & Transportation

Bill: HB 942 – Wetland and Waterways Program – Authorization for Stream Restoration Projects

Position: Oppose

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League opposes HB 942, which creates challenging new criteria for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to use to evaluate applications for stream restoration projects associated with achieving local MS4 permit targets, TMDL goals, mitigation goals, and other restoration projects.

MML echoes the Maryland Association of Municipal Stormwater Association (MAMSA)'s concerns, particularly the impact this would have on MS4 permits. This measure requires 10 years of monitoring for completed stream restoration projects before mitigation or pollution reduction credits can be granted to the party responsible. This is an extraordinarily long period of time to force restoring parties to wait.

Not only is withholding credits unfair, but it can harm restoring parties who need those credits to comply with their discharge permit requirements, which includes many municipalities. Many municipal storm sewer systems are regulated by discharge permits from MDE, which require that MS4 permittees restore untreated impervious acres within a certain time. Failure to comply could result in significant enforcement through administrative legal action filed by MDE, the US EPA, or even local residents.

Many municipalities rely on stream restoration projects to enable them to comply with discharge permit requirements. This measure would stand in the way of efficient and effective

For these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB 942.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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