



February 27, 2024

Dear Chair Senator Feldman, Vice Chair Senator Kagan, and Members of the Committee

Quaker Voice of Maryland is submitting this testimony in FAVOR of SBO653 – Clean Water Justice Act of 2024

We have identified this bill as one of our priorities for the 2024 general assembly because Quakers across Maryland have shared their concern about access to clean and safe water. One of the testimonies of Quakerism is stewardship of the natural environment and equity for all who rely on and enjoy natural resources. The Clean Water Justice Act of 2024 will authorize the State to enforce water quality protections as outlined in the federal Clean Water Act of 1972. Currently the State does not have the legal authority to do this.

Specifically, we believe this bill will:

- Provide members of impacted communities to enforce the law in state court upon discovery of violations.
- Allow impacted communities to work alongside the State to enforce clean water regulations.
- Authorize the imposition of penalties when violations are demonstrated and award relief for impacted communities.

We thank Senator Augustine for sponsoring this bill and encourage a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation.

Sincerely,

Dona Sorce

Working Group Member, on behalf of Quaker Voice of Maryland

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