



JESSICA FITZWATER
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

SB 196 – Soil Conservation Districts – Small Ponds – Plan Review Fees

DATE: January 23, 2024
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
POSITION: Support
FROM: Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

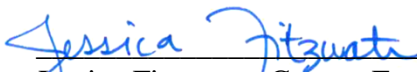
As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give SB 196 a FAVORABLE report.

This bill authorizes each soil conservation district to recommend a fee system for enactment by the local governing body, to cover the cost of reviewing small pond plans. Currently, the Maryland Department of Environment delegates the authority to review and approve small pond designs to Soil Conservation Districts. These small ponds are often used for sediment control and stormwater management.

The Catocin / Frederick Soil Conservation Districts utilize a part-time engineer for these small pond design reviews, a position supported by revenue from sediment control review fees. Unfortunately, this fee structure is not sufficient for all County operations and small pond review. In order to continue offering this service locally, we must identify sustainable and fair funding mechanisms. This bill allows us to do exactly that and would help ensure property owners can receive prompt review and approval of their small ponds.

The ability to establish a fee would allow Frederick County to expand and sustain our current service offering. As the budget tightens, measures such as these are important to ensure continued County services.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 196. On behalf of County Executive Fitzwater and the residents of Frederick County, I urge a FAVORABLE report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD