



Hon. Brian J. Feldman, Chairman
Education, Energy, & the Environment
Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Hon. Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Organization: The American Council of Engineering Companies/MD (ACEC/MD)

Bill: SB653 - Standing - Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Proceedings (Clean Water Justice Act of 2024)

Position: Oppose

Chairperson Feldman and Vice-Chair Kagan,

The American Council of Engineering Companies/MD (ACEC/MD) is the representative organization for approximately 90 consulting engineering firms of various sizes across the state. These firms play a crucial role in serving both the public and private sectors by actively participating in the design and development of essential infrastructure such as public water and wastewater systems, bridges, highways, building structures, and environmental projects.

Our organization's member firms collectively employ approximately 7,000 individuals statewide, and approximately forty percent of ACEC/MD's membership is comprised of certified small, minority-owned, or women-owned businesses, reflecting our commitment to diversity and inclusion within the engineering industry. We respectfully **oppose** this bill.

We believe the proposed legislation may undermine the authority and decision-making processes of existing regulatory agencies responsible for overseeing environmental protection. Also, granting standing to a wide range of individuals and associations may open the door to frivolous lawsuits that could burden the legal system and divert resources away from addressing legitimate environmental concerns. It is essential to strike a balance between access to justice and preventing the misuse of legal mechanisms.

For any comments, inquiries, or further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at cfaison@acecmd.org.

Respectfully,

Chad Faison
Executive Director
ACEC/MD