



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 148

Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program - Funding for Underserved and Overburdened Communities

Date: March 27, 2024	Position: Favorable With Amendment
To: Environment & Transportation Committee	From: Gussie Maguire Maryland Staff Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENT** SB 148, which would authorize increased funding for the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program and direct at least 40% of that funding towards projects located in and directly serving underserved and overburdened communities, and communities where at least 90% of households are threatened by extreme flooding in the next 30 years.

The bill as introduced included only underserved and overburdened communities in that dedicated 40% of funding, making it a powerful vehicle for environmental justice that is consistent with the Federal Justice 40 initiative. Often located in low-lying and historically “undesirable” areas, underserved and overburdened communities already experience sunny day flooding thanks to poorly-designed stormwater conveyances and dangerous sewer backups when aging infrastructure cannot cope with rainwater infiltration during intense storms. Residents of these communities may also lack the resources to permanently relocate to higher ground.

Including areas in which at least 90% of households are threatened by extreme flooding would open the funding intended to be dedicated to historically disinvested communities to some of Maryland’s wealthiest areas. Some of Maryland’s most valuable real estate, featuring scenic bay or ocean views and private access, fall into this category. While these communities can certainly receive funding for projects through the Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program, making them eligible for the 40% of funding dedicated to be reserved for underserved and overburdened communities undermines the intent of reserving those funds.

CBF urges the Committee’s FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT report on SB 148.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.