



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1165**

**Stream and Watershed Restoration - Stream Restoration Contractor Licensing and Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Restoration and Funding (Whole Watershed Act)**

**FAVORABLE**

**DATE: March 1, 2024**

**TO:** Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Regina Boyce, Vice Chair and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Walter Tucker, Member, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

**DATE:** March 1, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1165. The Episcopal Church endorses responsible stewardship of God's creation. Our standard of living has led to a degradation of our sacred earth, and we have a moral responsibility to work for restoration of the environment, including working towards clean water.

Restoration efforts are needed for our watersheds that feed the Chesapeake Bay. Just looking at Anne Arundel County, according to the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy, all 12 of Anne Arundel County's watersheds are considered "impaired". This bill concentrates funding and expertise on up to five watersheds across Maryland with a goal of restoring those watersheds and removing those watersheds from the Impaired list on an expedited timeline.

All creation is a gift from God that we need to nurture. This bill promotes environmental stewardship and care for our local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

**The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.**