



February 28, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support with Amendments -- HB 1165 (Stream and Watershed Restoration- Stream Restoration Contractor Licensing and Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Restoration and Funding (Whole Watershed Act))

Dear Chairman Korman:

On behalf of the Maryland Municipal Stormwater Association (MAMSA), I am writing to support with amendments HB 1165, which would do two primary things: (1) create a Stream Restoration Contractors Licensing Board and (2) create a Whole Watershed Fund Partnership which would allow a State Management Team to fund environmental restoration projects.

MAMSA is an association of the State's local governments and leading stormwater consultant firms who work for clean water and safe infrastructure based on sound science and good public policy.

MAMSA strongly supports stream restoration projects as a tool to help recover the hydrological and ecological functions of streams that have been damaged over time by land development. These projects have been thoroughly vetted in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed by multiple Chesapeake Bay Program Expert Panels that represent a broad scientific community. The most recent Expert Panel Memo, which was issued in October 2020, was written by representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Maryland Department of the Environment, Virginia Tech, the University of Maryland, and stream restoration practitioners, among others. MAMSA members rely on and stand by the implementation of these projects based on their positive impacts to the natural environment.

MAMSA generally supports HB 1165 as filed, with one requested amendment. Please add local government representatives (appointed by MACO and MML) to the Stream Restoration Contractors Licensing Board (beginning on p. 11, l. 13).

We understand that there are ongoing discussions about possible amendments to the bill. MAMSA appreciates the opportunity to share member thoughts as stormwater professionals on any future changes to the text.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at Lisa@AquaLaw.com or 804-716-9021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa M. Ochsenhirt".

Lisa M. Ochsenhirt, MAMSA Deputy General Counsel

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee, HB 1165 Sponsors