



Hon. Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and Transportation
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce and members of the Committee,

The Chesapeake Watershed Restoration Professionals (CWRP) is a coalition of the primary businesses that implement watershed practices to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Altogether, we comprise thousands of Marylanders employed in careers that invest in the environment here on the ground in the Bay region; Engineering, ecology, project development, and construction are all critical elements to a thriving Chesapeake Bay, and we do it all.

As such, CWRP supports HB 1165, and we are grateful for the renewed focus on watershed restoration. CWRP believes that the pilot programs launched by this bill would steer resources toward specific goals in specific watersheds that will demonstrate the effectiveness of BMPs from stream restoration to riparian buffer management.

Additionally, CWRP believes that whoever has the privilege of working in resources as sensitive of our streams should be qualified to do so and should be held to high standards. Licensing these professionals would help the restoration community by keeping standards up to a level appropriate to the needs of this environment. We support this effort, even though the licensing of stream restoration contractors would put a burden on our members that doesn't currently exist.

That said, we are concerned about some contents of the proposed amendments we've seen and would oppose adding any duplicative or burdensome public notice, engineering, or administrative requirements that would add cost to taxpayers and delay an already lengthy permitting process. We believe that more transparency in permitting is a good thing and support a more transparent and accessible permitting platform to inform the public. We also support MDE's Stream Restoration Checklist as a useful process in guiding stream restoration as a practice.

We thank you and encourage you to support HB 1165 as written.

Sincerely,

Liam O'Meara,

President