



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education

## House Bill 631

Natural Resources – Protection of Beaver Population and Habitat – County Authority (Beaver Believer Act)

Date: February 21, 2024

Position: **Favorable**

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Gussie Maguire  
MD Staff Scientist

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 631 which authorizes counties to enact local laws promoting, protecting, and supporting beaver populations and habitats.

The North American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) could be called the Chesapeake Bay watershed's original stormwater management engineer. As the species begins to rebound from a legacy of trapping and hunting, its positive impact on the watershed has been marked. Beaver dams help trap sediment, manage nutrients, and restore habitat for other native flora and fauna. The watershed's inhabitants face ongoing runoff woes, but working with these natural experts has proven successful and cost-effective: low-tech beaver dam analogs constructed by humans have been used to attract beavers, who then improve upon and expand the area of restoration<sup>i</sup>. Protecting beavers and their habitats allows them to provide crucial ecosystem services, inspire best management practices, increase climate resilience, and improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

### CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 631.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

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<sup>i</sup> <https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2021/01/01/leave-it-to-beavers-keystone-species-provides-nature-based-restoration/>

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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.