



March 14, 2024

Bill: HB 993 - Commemorative Weeks - Maryland Climate Education Week
Position: Support

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (“the Alliance”) respectfully requests a favorable report for House Bill 993 - Commemorative Weeks - Maryland Climate Education Week, which would establish the first week of April as a time to encourage all Marylanders to participate in climate educational activities and take action toward the State’s climate commitment.

The Alliance restores the lands and waters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our collaborative and action-oriented approach delivers on-the-ground solutions, technical assistance, and builds capacity to achieve healthier lands and waters.

In Maryland, the Alliance collaborates with all four of the state’s Historically Black Universities (HBCUs) to increase student exposure to green careers through experiential learning, workforce development opportunities, and jointly developed restoration projects. Since 2021, the Alliance has coordinated and co-planned with our Maryland HBCU partners over 14 seminars reaching 300+ students. We identify each Chesapeake Bay-related seminar topic based on the issues of most importance to the student body. Climate change and its intersection with environmental justice are consistently top of the list. In particular, we see this interest within the Bowie State University community, with whom we hold our most mature HBCU partnership. For example, together we hosted a [Climate Justice Dinner & Dialogue](#) in 2022 and a Leadership in Climate Action Town Hall as part of the [inaugural 2023 Maryland Climate Teach-In](#).

It is clear to the Alliance that the next generation of Maryland’s HBCU graduates and environmental stewards are asking us to prioritize and commit to climate education and action. The establishment of Maryland Climate Education Week would be an impactful way to reaffirm Maryland as a leader in climate change education. It would also signal to these students that the state takes climate change action as seriously as they do. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 993.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Fritz", is positioned above a horizontal line.

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