

SB0653_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

2/27/2024

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0653 – FAVORABLE

Standing - Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Proceedings (Clean Water Justice Act of 2024)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0653, Standing - Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Proceedings (Clean Water Justice Act of 2024)

This bill anticipates a possible United States Supreme Court decision that would handicap the ability of persons and institutions to pursue lawsuits in protection of clean water protection and availability. It will establish standing for persons and associations to initiate civil actions to protect natural resources. It will bestow on the courts the power to grant certain relief, award costs, and impose civil penalties and civil actions to protect our waters. The availability of legal paths to remediate bad conduct can often serve as an inhibition to untoward conduct.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency addresses Source Water Protection with specific actions on *How Can You Protect Source Waters*.¹ This bill will add a legal framework facilitating any of the recommended steps backing them with concrete actions and steps individuals, associations and the courts can do to uphold environmental laws on water.

According to Earth.org “Water scarcity is a growing crisis affecting many parts of the world. According to the United Nations, over 40% of the global population currently experiences water shortages, and this figure is expected to grow in the coming years. To make matters worse, less than 3% of the world’s water supply is freshwater suitable and accessible for human use. Sustainable access to water will be one of the defining issues of our time and it is a problem we need to tackle now.”²

This bill agrees with organizations whose mission is environmental protection and sets paths to make that protection a reality.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0653.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection/how-can-you-help-protect-source-water>

² <https://earth.org/understanding-the-importance-of-water-conservation/>