



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

House Bill 128

Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025

Date: January 23, 2025	Position: Favorable
To: Economic Matters Committee	From: Gussie Maguire,
Environment & Transportation Committee	MD Staff Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 128 which establishes a state fund to adapt to or mitigate impacts of climate change by requiring payments from fossil fuel companies proportional to the volume of greenhouse gas emissions produced. These funds would be used to pay for climate resiliency projects throughout the state.

40 years ago, 9 inches of rain was considered a hundred-year rainfall event. Today, that amount is predicted to occur once in a decade. Few stormwater management practices across the state were designed to handle this increased precipitation. The state is also experiencing record high tides, even on sunny days, along its 3,000+ miles of tidal coastland. These tides meet inadequate stormwater drainage systems and cause persistent and worsening flooding in low-lying residential areas—home to many of the state’s underserved and overburdened communities. To address this impact on some of Maryland’s most vulnerable, the bill directs 40% of funding towards communities disproportionately impacted by climate change.

The Maryland Department of the Environment’s [2024 Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality](#) found that almost every stream in the state is warming. Rising water temperatures - a result of increased air temperatures, industrial discharges, and stormwater management practices that inadvertently heat stored runoff - stress sensitive fish and invertebrates, contributing to increased mortality even in catch and release fishing practices. Aquatic species hold critical roles in Maryland’s recreational opportunities, in the seafood industry, and within their ecosystems. To protect the people and places that Marylanders hold dear, the state must make necessary infrastructure investments to adapt to new extremes.

Holding fossil fuel companies financially responsible for their impacts on the state will provide a significant source of revenue to invest into crucial infrastructure needed to make Maryland climate-resilient. This is an issue of fundamental fairness: fossil fuel companies can afford to pay for their pollution impacts. Maryland taxpayers should not be asked to subsidize the protection of themselves, their neighbors, and economically crucial ecosystems for multi-billion-dollar corporations.

CBF urges the Committee’s FAVORABLE report on HB 128.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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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.