



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 176

Agriculture - Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan - Uses of Information

Date: January 28, 2025

To: Education, Energy, &
The Environment Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Matt Stegman,
Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 176 which would permit the Department of Agriculture (MDA) to access soil conservation and water quality plans if needed to complete certain agency enforcement actions. The Department of the Environment (MDE) already may access this information for some water quality enforcement actions undertaken by that agency. Existing law directs that the information in these plans be maintained in a way that protects the identity of individuals for whom the plans have been prepared.

Consistent and effective enforcement of environmental protections is essential to sustaining the recovery efforts for the Chesapeake Bay. This bill makes a sensible change to current law that puts MDA in the same position as other agencies tasked with enforcing water quality laws and regulations.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 176.

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.