



Testimony to The SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

SB 168 - Environmental Justice in Confined Aquatic Disposal Act

POSITION: Support

By: Linda T. Kohn, President

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Since the emergence of the environment movement in the 1970s, the League of Women Voters has advocated for policies that protect our planet and promote public health. The League believes that advancing environmental justice is critical for ensuring an equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future for all Marylanders.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **supports SB 168**. This legislation is an important step toward addressing the ongoing environmental injustices faced by overburdened and underserved communities in Maryland. **SB 168** would ensure that Maryland's overburdened communities are protected from the construction of confined aquatic disposal (CAD) cells, which impose a greater risk of being exposed to pollution or contamination.

SB 168 is not a prohibition on developing new CAD cells but a mechanism to ensure that future siting decisions do not further compound the environmental injustices faced by Maryland's already overburdened communities. Overburdened and underserved communities - namely low-income communities and communities of color - disproportionately bear the brunt of environmental pollution and its associated health impacts. Projects that pose threats to air and water quality are often placed in these overburdened and underserved census tracts, perpetuating inequities in opportunity and health outcomes. **SB 168** would work to protect these communities from further environmental injustices at the hands of the state's permitting process.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **urges a favorable report on SB 168**.