

Senate Bill 168 – SUPPORT

Senate Bill 168 – Environment

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

“Environmental Justice in Confined Aquatic Disposal Act”

My name is Amanda Hughes. I am a military spouse and mother of 2. I live and work in the community of Pasadena in Anne Arundel County.

My time here as a resident of this area has been only 2 years, but from the state of the waters already I know that years more of this pollution CANNOT continue. When parents can't feel safe taking their children to the bay due to bacteria, parasites, pollution, and TONS of trash; then it is time to look at why. No longer shall our citizens and our next generations suffer the environmental decay allowed under these actions. For all our wildlife and all our habitat we must never allow anything to be buried in the bay or dumped in the bay. There are PFOAs and toxic chemicals in the water neither of which are acceptable for our communities.

Please read this excerpt from the website Chesapeake Bay Foundation hosts.

"What are Chemical Contaminants?"

Chemical contamination occurs when chemicals are either found where they shouldn't be or are present in amounts that are higher in concentration than is considered safe. Toxic chemicals are constantly entering the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams via industrial sites, military bases, wastewater, stormwater, agriculture, and air pollution. These dangerous chemicals, including mercury and other metals, pesticides, PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls), PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), and PFAS (per- or poly-fluoroalkyl substances), do not break down easily, persisting in the environment for many years. You can't see them, smell them, or taste them, but these contaminants are present, causing harm to the Bay, its fish, and wildlife—and many have also been linked to human health problems.

Types of Chemical Contaminants

There are many types of chemical contaminants in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, almost three-quarters of the Chesapeake Bay's tidal waters are considered impaired by contaminants. Each contaminant has a unique and harmful impact on the fish, birds, and humans that depend on the Bay. Many bioaccumulate, or build up in the body, faster than they can be eliminated."

<https://www.cbf.org/issues/chemical-contamination/index.html>

I sincerely ask that in the interest of the public we unite together and clean the bay. One day I hope we can say that our efforts and voices were heard and communities rallied together to fix what we all know is broke.

While I have your attention I would like to further support human health with my words on additional related topics.

Pollution is not just a problem in the water, but it's in the air. Geoengineering over our skies must end. We need cleaner and faster transportation for the city! While I lived in Europe for 5 years I saw how efficient it was for cities to have trains that people didn't need to drive everywhere. They simply walked to the train station and saved the towns and cities from having too much traffic. Almost every town has a connection to a high speed train. Representatives need to hear that this area severely needs trains. This will cut the air pollution down by a lot and help travelers get where they need to go. From Baltimore and all the areas in between to DC we need trains. This traffic is utterly ridiculous.

I want to say there is also pollution in the food we consume and in our cosmetics. With all the seemingly endless lists chemicals and preservatives, its nauseating. Toxins build up in homes in the forms of volatile organic compounds from the fragrances and the cleaning supplies people use. Toxic fire retardants and VOCs off gas from new furniture. Companies push the line when it comes to health. Cheaper unhealthy ingredients, many preservatives, parabens, phthalates, and cancer-causing chemicals all banned by the thousands in EU, but for our food and products Americans consume everyday, we get Brighter dyed food and health problems with our side of fries.

With all this in mind, please don't let another pollution be allowed. Our bodies, our childrens bodies are overloaded with endocrine disrupting, reproductive health disturbing chemicals. The buck stops with me. I am my family's 1st defense against bad health. I STRONGLY SUPPORT.

It is important that environmental justice is supported in pollution-overburdened communities near the Patapsco River and that the river, its waterways, and communities near these waterways are not subjected to further pollution risks posed by Confined Aquatic Disposal of dredge material. I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB 168 which will address longstanding environmental injustices on the Patapsco and protect pollution-impacted communities and waterways from further pollution caused by Confined Aquatic Disposal.

Thank You,

Amanda Hughes

Pasadena