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TESTIMONY ON HB#0131 -
FAVORABLE

Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Septic System Upgrade Program

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0131, Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Septic System Upgrade Program

This bill facilitates accomplishment of the goals of [Senate Bill 320 \(Bay Restoration Fund\)](#) which was signed into law on May 26, 2004. Chesapeake Bay has experienced a decline in water quality due to over enrichment of nutrients (mainly phosphorus and nitrogen). Effluent from wastewater treatment plants is one of the top three major contributors of nutrients entering the Bay (urban and agricultural runoffs are the other two). [This bill created] a dedicated fund, financed by wastewater treatment plant users, to upgrade Maryland's wastewater treatment plants with [enhanced nutrient removal \(ENR\) technology](#) so they are capable of achieving [a specific] wastewater effluent quality. ¹

This will be accomplished by authorizing the Department of the Environment to establish performance-based funding levels for best available nitrogen removal technologies for on-site sewage disposal systems using a certain evaluation and ranking process. It further requires the Department to make certain eligible funding levels available on its website. It will alter priorities for funding the repair or replacement of certain on-site sewage disposal systems by identifying failing systems located within the watershed of a nitrogen-impaired body of water.

The Chesapeake Bay is intrinsic to life in Maryland. It is part of our state identity, local culture, and a vibrant part of Maryland's history and State pride. ² For both current and future generations we must do all we can to protect this vital part of our state.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#0131.

¹ <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/bayrestorationfund/pages/index.aspx>

² <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/TMDL/TMDLImplementation/Pages/what-is-the-bay.aspx#:~:text=Maryland's%20National%20Treasure&text=It%20provides%20its%20inhabitants%20with,generatio ns%20of%20Marylanders%20to%20enjoy.>