



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## House Bill 1296

### Environment – Managed Aquifer Recharge Pilot Program – Establishment

Date: March 5, 2025

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**

From: Gussie Maguire,  
MD Staff Scientist

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1296, which establishes a program and permitting for managed aquifer recharge on a pilot study scale. Managed aquifer recharge is a technique used around the country and world to protect groundwater resources from depletion, land subsidence, and saltwater intrusion.

Millions of Maryland residents, particularly those living on the coastal plain, depend upon groundwater for drinking water and irrigation<sup>1</sup>. Sea level rise has contributed to saltwater intrusion in coastal aquifers, which is exacerbated as more and more fresh water is pumped out of the aquifer for individual and municipal use, agriculture, and other needs. Injecting fresh water back into the aquifer through a managed aquifer recharge program combats saltwater intrusion in coastal areas, making it a tool in the state's coastal resiliency toolbox.

The extremely high level of treatment required for managed aquifer recharge depends upon advanced wastewater treatment technologies, such as reverse osmosis and granular activated carbon. These technologies remove nitrogen, phosphorous, and other pollutants more effectively than traditional treatment, and they can also remove contaminants traditional treatments miss, including pharmaceuticals, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and other emerging contaminants of concern. The proliferation of this level of water treatment, whether used for managed aquifer recharge, reservoir augmentation, or simply to improve point source wastewater discharge, will result in better water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

### **CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 1296.**

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mgs.md.gov/groundwater/wateruse.html>