



February 11, 2025

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SUPPORT: HB506 - Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports HB506, the Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act, and we appreciate the interdepartmental coordination that has developed this legislation and demonstrates leadership for Chesapeake Bay restoration and its sustained health.

Maryland's environmental community is pleased to have Governor Moore serving at the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council, as 2025 is an important year the Chesapeake Bay partnership set for a number of goals within the Bay Agreement to be achieved. Governor Moore's leadership has been important to holding that partnership together and finding ways to apply lessons learned and continue collaborative efforts to improve outcomes for the Chesapeake Bay. While not all goals have been achieved, progress has certainly been made. And just as Governor Moore has demonstrated leadership in maintaining the Bay Partnership that is finding new ways to address the Bay's challenges, this bill similarly addresses a number of important areas of policy to continue Maryland's leadership in stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act (HB506), makes adjustments, modernizations, and offers new approaches to programs from agriculture to aquaculture. In response to the policy urgencies contained in the [Chesapeake Bay Program's Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response](#) (CESR), this bill seeks to ensure:

- Maryland's Department of Natural Resources has an efficient, sustainable, long term water quality monitoring program that will provide essential underpinnings to Chesapeake Bay restoration into the future.
- Maryland's Department of Agriculture is able to try new ways to align environmental goals and initiatives of the Department and the State while enhancing farm profitability" with the Leaders in Environmentally Engaged Farming (LEEF) pilot program.
- The Whole Watershed Act passed last year has, assuming adequate funding, the appropriate support and processes in place to move nimbly to achieve improved water quality outcomes across the state.
- Aquaculture permitting is a simpler process, demonstrating a commitment to increasing oyster aquaculture adoption in Maryland.

Maryland LCV has worked with the Administration and other advocates to strengthen and clarify some provisions of this bill to ensure all the tools are put in place for continued success in restoring and stewarding the Chesapeake Bay. And we support the amendments offered thus far. Maryland LCV thanks the President of the Senate and the Administration for this important bill and we urge a favorable report.