



Saving the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and Special Places

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Date: March 4, 2025
Bill Number: **HB 506 - Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act**
Committee: House Environment & Transportation
Position: Favorable

Chesapeake Conservancy supports HB 506 - Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act for the purpose of increasing and improving upon conservation practices, improving upon water quality monitoring, and with generally expediting the permitting of Whole Watershed Restoration Partnership projects.

The Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act would establish a “Maryland Leaders in Environmentally Engaged Farming (LEEF) Program” as well as an associated “Maryland Leaders in Environmentally Engaged Farming Program Fund, to support the Program's intent. The LEEF program would help reduce nutrient pollution, help increase farm-based carbon sequestration, and incentivize the coordinated adoption of conservation practices.

Among other things, this bill alters the definition of "healthy soils" to include regenerative practices and traditions, which includes stewardship approaches and practices that: draws on traditions, promotes climate justice, and support initiatives to increase food production within the state. Additionally, this bill seeks to expedite the permitting of the Whole Watershed Restoration Partnership projects.

We support continued improvement with the adoption of conservation practices, improved and clarified water quality monitoring, and efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Whole Watershed Restoration Partnership.

Chesapeake Conservancy is the only watershed-wide organization focused on both land conservation and stream restoration to achieve a healthier Chesapeake Bay. We ask that you continue to invest in conservation and restoration, and we thank you for your service.

For further information, please contact Mark Conway, Executive Vice President of External Affairs, at MConway@ChesapeakeConservancy.org or 443-321-3610.

We respectfully request a favorable committee report.