



**SB 0688 - SUPPORT**

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**SB 0688**

**Environment - Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects –  
Requirements and Limitations**

Education, Energy, and the Environment

March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

The Climate Communications Coalition is a Maryland-based grassroots climate and environmental justice non-profit, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition, and of the Maryland Climate Justice Wing, among others. The Climate Communications Coalition strongly supports SB 0688.

The success or failure of stream restoration depends on the ease of native biota to recolonize and effectively restore its processes after restoration. This success is directly impacted by the structure and composition of a restored creek, the potential for arrival of non-native species, in addition to the long-term viability and scale of the restoration (1). Needless to say that we cannot recreate the processes, structure and composition of a natural creek that took centuries to thousands of years to evolve, with the result that biota, from plant life to macroinvertebrates (2), tend to vary significantly from before to after restoration. This deceives the purpose of any restoration project. In fact, most creeks do worse after restoration than before and require long-term maintenance or re-restoration, a costly and burdensome undertaking. Many of Maryland's restoration projects seem to be spurred by mitigation banking, other types of credits, and even logging expeditions rather than environmental need, drawing into question the motivation of stream restoration companies which actively solicit landowners to work on their creeks. Examples of destructive restoration projects and expensive repairs abound, including:

- UMBC Spring Grove restoration, Baltimore County "A \$27 Million waste" (3)
- Stony Run, Baltimore City, a \$10 Million project with \$500,000 in repairs (4)
- Lower Booze Creek, Montgomery County \$700,000 restoration with \$3.6 Million in repairs (6)
- Grosvenor Luxmanor Tributary, Montgomery County \$4.796 Million project (5)

Not to mention these troubled restoration projects (6):

- Asbury Methodist Village, Montgomery County
- Upper Watts Branch, Montgomery County
- Whetstone Run, Montgomery County



- Longfellow Neighborhood Stream, Howard County
- Solitaire Court Creek, Montgomery County
- Font Hill Tributary, Howard County
- Scotts Level Branch, Baltimore County
- Charles Parkway Stream, Charles County
- Tinkers Creek, Prince George's County
- Bear Branch, Prince Georges County
- Joseph's Branch, Montgomery County
- Cabin John Creek, Montgomery County
- Long Branch, Montgomery County
- Snakeden Branch, Montgomery County
- Riva Landing, Anne Arundel County

SB 0688 requires taking into consideration the above-mentioned measures of success, as also recommended by the Chesapeake Research Consortium's Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR) Report. To restore streams, we need to look at the pollution, erosion, and run off sources, in addition to stormwater management – not at small, discrete segments of a stream. A landscape or watershed approach would focus on the up to 90% of runoff pollution which comes from only 5-20% of the land (CESR Report). Let's focus on mitigating that runoff by using a much cheaper riparian reforestation approach along the source, rather than shaping a segment of a stream to match a preconceived notion of what it should look like.

The Climate Communications Coalition respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 0688.

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References:

- (1) Bond, N. R., & Lake, P. S. (2003). Local habitat restoration in streams: Constraints on the effectiveness of restoration for stream biota. *Ecological Management & Restoration*, 4(3), 193–198. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1442-8903.2003.00156.x>
- (2) Louhi, P., Mykrä, H., Paavola, R., Huusko, A., Vehanen, T., Mäki-Petäys, A., & Muotka, T. (2011). Twenty years of stream restoration in Finland: little response by benthic macroinvertebrate communities. *Ecological Applications*, 21(6), 1950–1961. <https://doi.org/10.1890/10-0591.1>
- (3) Hille, K. What a waste of \$27 million?: UMBC bulldozes Spring Grove Arboretum. *Baltimore Sun*. Feb 8, 2026. [https://article.wn.com/view/2026/02/08/What\\_a\\_waste\\_of\\_27\\_Million\\_UMBC\\_bulldozes\\_Spring\\_Grove\\_Arbor/](https://article.wn.com/view/2026/02/08/What_a_waste_of_27_Million_UMBC_bulldozes_Spring_Grove_Arbor/)
- (4) Wolf, J. (2023) Restoration of Baltimore's Stony Run is failing again, residents and scientists say. <https://baltimorebrew.com/2023/12/23/restoration-of-baltimores-stony-run-is-failing-again-residents-and-scientists-say/>
- (5) Department of Environmental Protection. Grosvenor Luxmanor Tributary Stream Restoration. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/water/clean-water-montgomery/watershed/restoration-projects/grosvenor-luxmanor.html>
- (6) Bawer, K. (2023) Stormwater Control using Stream "Restorations" Presentation. <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/02b-Bawer-Stormwater-Control-Using-Stream-Restoration.pdf>