

Senate Bill 688, Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects - Requirements and Limitations

Position: Support

February 27, 2026

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and honorable members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Aristos Xagoraris, and as a worried young citizen of Maryland, I am writing to express my support for the Senate Bill 688. I first learned about the terrible damage to waterways in Howard County during my Environmental Science GT Seminar at Burleigh Manor Middle School, and I feel that these stream stabilization projects have negatively affected the environment in our community.

From research, I have learned that stream stabilizations generate more runoff and sediment in our streams. This clouds the water and destroys aquatic habitats, which increases water treatment costs. Also, trees are taken out to make space for the heavy machinery, leading to more sunlight reaching the stream, this can cause an increase in the temperature of the water. This harms fish and aquatic invertebrates that live in the stream. The removal of trees also causes more erosion to be present in the stream, because the tree roots play a very important role in holding the soil of the stream banks together. Stabilizations usually make erosion even worse by taking out trees and compacting the soil, even though they are trying to fix that problem. Additionally, mature trees that are removed release lots of carbon dioxide into the air, increasing pollution in the air. These trees also provide critical habitats for animals, as well as food for woodpeckers.

Thus, I am pleased that Senate Bill 688 calls for the safety of fish and aquatic life in streams, so they can live healthy lives and create a healthy ecosystem within the stream. The bill mandates that stormwater runoff is treated before entering the stream. This is helpful for streams because it decreases the amount of impurities in the water. Also, the bill calls for the prevention of erosion in any stream stabilization. Erosion in streams pollutes the quality of the water with sedimentation and destroys the habitat for animals living in the stream, so preventing erosion is really important to preserve the ecosystems in our streams. Finally, I am delighted that the bill asks for the stream to stay functional so the ecosystem is healthy.

On behalf of the children of Maryland, who will inherit the environment you leave for us, I support Senate Bill 688.

Signed,
Aristos Xagoraris
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