

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:

As a concerned citizen of Maryland, I am writing to express my support for the Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects - Requirements and Limitations bill. I first learned about the terrible damage to waterways in Howard County during my Environmental Science G/T Seminar at Burleigh Manor Middle School, and I strongly agree that stream stabilizations are extremely unnecessary for our environment.

From research, I have learned that during stream stabilizations, workers usually bring in heavy machines to dig up parts of the stream, move large amounts of dirt, and add rocks, logs, or other materials to keep the streambanks from collapsing. Even though the purpose of this work is to stop erosion, prevent flooding, and make the stream safer during storms, the construction process can cause a lot of harm to the environment while it is happening. Trees, bushes, and other plants near the water may be cut down or destroyed, which can take away homes and shelter for animals like birds, frogs, turtles, insects, and small mammals. When the machines tear up the ground and disturb the streambed, the water can become very muddy and filled with sediment. This muddy water can block sunlight from reaching plants in the water and lower oxygen levels, which can make it harder for fish and other aquatic animals to survive. In addition, the noise, vibrations, and movement of the construction equipment can scare away wildlife, change the behavior of animals, and even drive them out of the area for a while. People who visit parks and natural areas near streams may also notice the noise and disruption, which can make it harder to enjoy the peaceful environment. In some cases, chemicals or oil from the machines could accidentally get into the water, which might harm both plants and animals. Overall, stream stabilization is meant to protect the area in the long run and reduce damage from storms, but it also has immediate impacts on the natural ecosystem, including plants, animals, and water quality, and it can take time for the environment to recover after construction is finished.

I am pleased that Senate Bill 688 calls for better rules and limits on stream and floodplain restoration projects in Maryland. This bill makes sure that the Department of the Environment carefully plans and monitors these projects so that rivers, streams, and natural areas are protected. Right now, some areas can get damaged by too much construction or poor planning, which can hurt the environment and make flooding worse. By having stronger rules, the bill can help prevent problems before they happen and make sure restoration projects actually help the land and water instead of causing more harm. This is important because clean water and healthy rivers affect not only the environment but also the people who live near them. I like this bill because it focuses on long-term thinking and responsible planning. When restoration work is done correctly, it can reduce flooding, prevent erosion, and make waterways cleaner. That

means fewer problems for towns and neighborhoods near rivers and streams. It also helps wildlife by protecting their homes and keeping their water clean. When people plan carefully, it benefits both the environment and the communities that rely on it. Bills like this show that the government can make choices that consider both nature and people, and that is something I think is very important for our state. Even though this bill is not about schools directly, it still matters to students and families in the Howard County Public School System. Healthy streams and safer flood areas make communities stronger and safer for everyone. It also means that outdoor areas near schools, parks, and neighborhoods are healthier, which is important for kids who play and learn outside. Supporting Senate Bill 688 shows that we are thinking about the future, keeping communities safe, and protecting the environment for the next generation. By caring about these issues now, we can make sure that students and families have cleaner water, safer neighborhoods, and better places to live and learn for many years to come.

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

Signed,
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