

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 Wetlands and Waterways Program - Stream Stabilization Projects 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 disagree with these practices and believe they are upsetting.

From research, I have learned that stream stabilization projects are performed for MS4 and mitigation credits. Stream stabilizations are said to restore and improve streams, yet they end up creating more harm than good. To complete these projects, heavy machinery is needed to cut through narrow spaces, endangering wildlife and cutting down trees. Not only does it affect the life near the stream, but it also compacts the soil, enabling runoff. These projects also require an unnecessary amount of trees to be cut down. The main issue is that mature trees are being replaced with young saplings that will not have the same environmental impact. These saplings also lack biodiversity and are often reduced to only one species. Because these immature trees do not provide stability, the banks are not well enough protected and are left bare. Additionally, by cutting down mature trees, we are releasing 40 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The stripped land creates overheating in the stream, causing issues for aquatic life. Stream stabilizations do not help or sustain the environmental needs. After all of this, the contractors put in little to no effort to maintain their work. The small trees are left unprotected, leading most of them to be eaten or damaged by the local animals. The contractors then plant new ones, do nothing to protect them, and then they keep the cycle going. Instead of taking responsibility for the damage they have caused, they only let more and more harm impact the streams. Streams that have gone through these processes are still untreated. The water quality often gets worse, and the fauna is heavily affected by these changes. They have not faced any improvement; they have seen the opposite. Stream stabilizations are doing the opposite of what we are seeking, hence why we need to stop them.

I am pleased that Senate Bill 688 calls for regulating the projects that will occur, maintaining the aftermaths of these projects, and reducing the harm that is being inflicted upon the environment. By overseeing what will be happening, streams are more likely to be enhanced and improved. The fauna will be better protected as there is thought being put behind these projects. This bill ensures that there will be control over the entire project; maintaining budgets, preventing further sediment and erosion, and keeping the water quality, something that was lacking in stream stabilizations.

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

Signed,
Tasnia Niti
3410 Font Hill Drive
Ellicott City, MD
21042