



POTOMAC  
RIVERKEEPER®  
NETWORK

3070 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
202.888.2037 (main)  
www.prknetwork.org

## RE: Support for HB1065 – Coal Combustion By-Product Materials Grant Program & Procurement Preference

Position: FAVORABLE

Hearing Date: March 4<sup>th</sup> , 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

Potomac Riverkeeper Network and the undersigned organizations write to express our support for **HB1065**, legislation that establishes a targeted framework to promote the **safe reuse of existing coal combustion by-products (coal ash)** while advancing environmental cleanup, climate goals, and economic opportunity in Maryland.

Maryland continues to face the legacy of coal ash disposal at multiple sites across the state—particularly **unlined landfills and impoundments that are known to leach contaminants into groundwater and nearby waterways**. Communities in areas such as **Brandywine (Prince George’s County)** and **Faulkner (Charles County)** have borne the burden of this pollution for decades, with ongoing risks to drinking water, public health, and the Potomac River and its tributaries.

**HB1065 provides a practical and necessary tool to address this legacy pollution.** By creating a grant program and procurement preference for construction materials that incorporate **Maryland-sourced coal ash**, the bill helps establish a financial pathway to **remove coal ash from these high-risk, unlined sites and put it to beneficial, regulated use.**

Importantly, we want to be clear about what this bill does—and does not—do:

- **HB1065 does NOT incentivize new coal burning.**  
The bill is focused on **existing, legacy coal ash** and does not create incentives for the generation of new coal combustion waste.
- **HB1065 DOES incentivize cleanup.**  
By creating demand for coal ash as a feedstock in construction materials, the bill helps



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drive the **removal of coal ash from leaking and unlined disposal sites**, where it currently poses ongoing environmental and public health risks.

In addition to supporting cleanup, HB1065 advances several key public policy goals:

- **Protecting water resources:** Reducing the volume of coal ash stored in unlined or poorly controlled conditions helps limit the continued leaching of toxic contaminants into groundwater and surface waters.
- **Advancing climate solutions:** The use of coal ash in cement and concrete can reduce reliance on more carbon-intensive materials, lowering the **embodied greenhouse gas emissions** of construction projects.
- **Supporting impacted communities:** The bill prioritizes **job creation, workforce development, and local hiring** in communities historically impacted by coal ash generation and disposal.
- **Ensuring accountability:** HB1065 requires environmental review, monitoring, and reporting related to coal ash reuse, helping ensure that materials are managed safely and transparently.

We recognize that strong implementation will be essential. As this program is developed, it will be critical to ensure:

- Robust environmental safeguards and enforcement
- Transparent monitoring and public reporting
- Meaningful protections for frontline and overburdened communities

With these considerations, we believe HB1065 represents a **balanced, forward-looking approach** that addresses longstanding environmental harms while aligning with Maryland's climate and economic priorities.

For too long, coal ash has remained a **persistent and unmanaged liability** in our communities. HB1065 offers an opportunity to move toward **responsible cleanup, beneficial reuse, and measurable environmental progress**.

We respectfully urge a favorable report on HB1065.

Sincerely,

Brent Walls, Program Director and Upper Potomac Riverkeeper  
Potomac Riverkeeper Network

Robin Broder, Acting Executive Director  
Waterkeepers Chesapeake

Matt Stegman, MD Staff Attorney  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Alice Volpitta, Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper  
Blue Water Baltimore

Bonnie Bick  
Mattawoman Watershed Society

Evan Isaacson, Staff Attorney  
Chesapeake Legal Alliance

Peter Alexander  
Indivisible HoCoMD

Ted Evgeniadis, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper  
Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association

Randy Lyon, Legislative Chair  
Sierra Club Maryland Chapter

Marisa Olszewski, Environmental Policy Manager  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters