



HB 0395 - OPPOSE

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HB 0395

**Water Pollution Control - Discharge Permits
Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations**

Environment and Transportation

February 11, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation 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 opposes HB 0395.

Maryland's environment and communities are currently insufficiently protected against Centralized Animal Feeding Operations' (CAFOs) poor nutrient, manure, and waste management and storage. This poor management includes the consistent over-application of manure containing pathogens, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and heavy metals to crop fields from where these leak into our waterways, groundwater, and the Bay. Poor storage of often toxic digestate also provokes leakage into water.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires a permit for any pollutants discharged directly or indirectly.

HB 0395 would exacerbate the negative impacts from livestock pollution on waterways, groundwater, and the Bay, by removing the requirement to obtain a general discharge permit before beginning construction. Exempting polluters such as CAFOs from common sense permitting removes this safeguard against irreversible environmental destruction and potentially lethal impacts on human health. CAFOs need more regulation, not less.

The Climate Communications Coalition respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB 0395.

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