

TESTIMONY

Environment – Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects – Requirements and Limitations, HB1465

Public Hearing March 11, 2026

Chair Marc Korman and members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee,

I am writing against the changes to COMAR proposed in HB1465, Environment – Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects – Requirements and Limitations.

I am a licensed civil engineer in the State of Maryland. Now retired, I have served the people of Maryland for more than 30 years as a water resources engineer. I have managed water quality projects for the City of Gaithersburg and for both Montgomery County and Prince George's County as a contractor. Also, I reviewed the water quality plans for Fairfax County, VA. I have been a member of the Stormwater Committee of the Chesapeake Water Environment Association since its inception in 2010 and recently stepped back from being its co-chair. I also served the Montgomery County Water Quality Advisory Group as its co-chair.

The EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program recognizes that stream restorations are one of an array of choices to mitigate water quality throughout the region. This bill would hamper municipalities that choose to use these methods to meet the requirements of their Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permits.

This bill asks that upland controls be considered first before stream restorations. While upland, close-to-the-source controls are used in new development, their use in retrofitting – providing controls for past issues – is extremely limited. These controls can easily cost 10 times that of stream restorations for the equivalent treatment water quality improvement.

Please don't hamper municipalities' use of stream restorations to meet MS4 permit goals. Cities and counties in Maryland need every trick in the bag to improve the water environment of our state.

Beth Forbes, P.E.
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