

**March 9, 2026**

**Dear Delegates Terrasa, Ruth and Lehman,**

**My name is Winnie Carpenter, and I submit written testimony on behalf of Oella-Catonsville Flood Solutions for a Favorable Report for HB1465. Environment— Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects – Requirements and Limitations**

To minimize disturbances to existing streams, floodplains and upland forests, please consider the protection of forest buffers and open space for stream restoration projects and all new (re)development. We ask that the use of a “forest bank” be discouraged, especially if trees are being removed in an area with a tributary, wetlands or floodplain, which preserves natural water flow and ecological balance — to a **different** watershed.

In **2019** a stream restoration project was designed and constructed for \$1.5M to address the historic, and continuing, flooding along Cooper Branch in Catonsville, Baltimore County, north of Oella Avenue and east of Trolley Trail #9. (Attached Exhibit 1) This area was a shade forest with mature trees. Numerous heavy equipment were used to remove trees and cut a new stream channel (Attached Exhibit 2 & 3) damaging the sensitive area.

**This project failed.**

The project did not stop the erosion or improve the water quality along Cooper Branch. The project did not reduce the flooding. In **2020**, just one year later, Cooper Branch flooded, and again in **2024** and again in **2025**. The flooding closed Frederick Road in two locations, at the gas station and in front of the Wilkins-Rogers Mill. (Attached Exhibits 4 & 5) This flooding eroded the Trolley Trail #9 and caused a cascade of storm water onto Westchester Avenue and due to the quantity of water in July, 2025 also onto Parking Lot A on Oella Avenue, filling a storm drain on Oella Avenue, and subsequently flooding the basement of the Trolley Stop restaurant. This flooding occurred not from the Patapsco River, but from a tributary.

This project area is now in the hot sun and filled with invasive species.

Baltimore County recognizes that more work needs to be done, however we stress the importance for the natural water flow and ecological balance be preserved.

Residents are impacted by projects such as this near their neighborhoods. Please involve them in the development/permitting decisions since these projects influence the safety, enjoyment, and overall well-being of their families, as well as the economic value of their home, property, and businesses.

**We request a favorable report for HB1465.**

Thank you.