



Testimony on Bill 79-11
An Ordinance Concerning: a Stormwater Management and Restoration Fund and
Stormwater Management Charge
Presented on December 5, 2011

My name is Eric Smith. I am here tonight on behalf of the Advocates for Herring Bay. We urge you to vote in favor of bill 79-11 for three reasons:

First, it is smart budgeting. It will create a stable source of funding for essential waterway projects that currently lack sufficient funding. If we wait, waterway health will worsen and become more expensive to improve. Underinvesting now could lead to expensive sanctions under federal and state pollution laws. By passing this bill, you would wisely avoid an environmental debt that our children would have to pay in the future.

Second, we think the size of the fee is reasonable. However, a fee of any size may be a burden for some families. For that reason, we strongly support provisions that would allow lower income households to file for an exemption.

Finally, we strongly support the bill's procedural safeguards that will protect taxpayers' interests. Creating a dedicated trust fund will allow citizens to verify that fees are only being spent for the specified purposes. In addition, the residential fee will be relatively simple to administer. The only suggestion we offer is that you index the fee for inflation every few years to ensure that program funding keeps pace with growth in costs and incomes.

The Chesapeake Bay is Anne Arundel County's greatest asset. It is up to us to restore and protect it. This bill will allow us to distribute that responsibility among those who will benefit—all of us.

Please vote for bill 79-11.