

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 61 (Senator Simonaire)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Natural Resources - Forest Lands and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays
2010 Trust Fund - Miscellaneous Corrections**

This bill changes terminology used in provisions of law relating to forest lands and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund. References to the “Chesapeake 2000 Agreement” are replaced with the “2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement” and references to “tributary strategies” are generally replaced with references to “State and local watershed implementation plans.” “Watershed implementation plan” is defined as a plan to achieve the nutrient and sediment limits required under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The “Chesapeake 2000 Agreement” is referenced in provisions of law relating to forest lands and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund as the source of Chesapeake Bay restoration goals which State policy under those laws is intended to help achieve. “Tributary strategies” are referenced under the provisions of law relating to the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund as the plans developed in accordance with the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution entering the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays and their tributaries.

Background: The first Chesapeake Bay agreement was signed in 1983 by the Governors of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement is the most recent agreement, and the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement was the most recent prior update. In addition to the original signatories, Delaware, New York, and West Virginia, as well as other federal agencies, are also parties to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement sets 10 overall goals relating to different aspects of restoration and protection of the bay. Some address clean water, while others address aspects such as climate resiliency, land conservation, and fish and wildlife habitats. The agreement's water quality goal is based on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL established by EPA. The TMDL sets forth specific pollution reduction requirements for Maryland and other jurisdictions within the bay watershed. Watershed implementation plans developed by the bay jurisdictions detail the strategies and specific actions that are being implemented to reduce pollution.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Association of Counties, Chesapeake Bay Program, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 14, 2016
md/lgc

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510