

OPPOSE HB5

Topic: Community Flood Preparedness Fund

Bill Patron: Del. James Morefield

Reasons to Oppose HB5: This proposal diverts funding from the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (FUND) and creates a Flood Relief Fund. The existing FUND is a statewide program designed to help localities plan for, study, and design projects to protect against future flooding. This bill seeks to divert that funding to projects that repair damage from past flooding and would open the FUND for further earmarking.

Overview: The Community Flood Preparedness Fund (FUND) is part of a package of initiatives from the 2020 General Assembly that had Virginia join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) with the proceeds going to a low-income energy efficiency program (50%) and the FUND (45%). The FUND is a statewide program, providing funding awarded on a competitive basis for flood protection studies, capacity building for localities to address flooding, and flood control projects.

HB 5 would earmark some of these flood protection revenues for a post-disaster program that would fill the gap when the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) cannot provide funding. This is an inappropriate use of the FUND and, by earmarking portions of the fund for other uses, this bill opens up this funding source for other diversions of revenues.

Virginia is experiencing major flooding threats due to climate change, from sea level rise in coastal regions and increased rainfall intensity statewide. We need a comprehensive program to address these threats, and need to avoid earmarking of the FUND for other purposes.

Weakening the FUND also poses a threat to Virginia's continued participation in RGGI.



Wetlands Watch

Skip Stiles
skip.stiles@wetlandswatch.org
www.wetlandswatch.org



Virginia Conservation Network

vcn@vcnva.org
(804) 644-0283
www.VCNVA.org

This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.