



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

Senate Bill 73 Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program - Renaming

Date: March 26, 2025
To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**
From: Allison Colden,
Executive Director

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 73 which would rename the Chesapeake Conservation Corps program to the Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps Program. The Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps (CCCC) hires from among the brightest new graduates in the environmental sciences to complete their skills training and engage in meaningful experiences to round out their academic education. Chesapeake Bay Foundation has been a host organization for numerous CCCC members, many of whom have been offered permanent positions within the organization. On the impact of the program on their personal growth and careers, former CCCC members, now CBF staff share:

"I was in the inaugural class of the Chesapeake Conservation Corps in 2010. CCC kick started my career in the environmental field, allowing me opportunities to explore and restore habitat across the Chesapeake region, work with wonderful people, grow in my career and engage with diverse communities across the watershed, and so much more."

- Carmera Thomas-Wilhite, CBF Vice President for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

"The CCCC helped me lay the groundwork for making the next steps in my career in coastal restoration in the Chesapeake Bay. Through the program, I was able to build relationships with so many influential people who mentored me and pushed me to achieve my professional goals, as well as with peers, many of whom I continue to work with in some capacity."

- Julie Luecke, CBF Maryland Coastal Resource Scientist

"The CCCC program has provided me with hands-on experience in the environmental field and instilled confidence within myself as a young professional through invaluable personal and professional mentorship as well as comradery with my fellow corps members."

- Adelle Thrush, 2025 CBF Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps Member

The impact of this program would not be possible without the leadership of Sen. Mike Miller who carried the legislation that led to its establishment. It is only appropriate that the program he supported and his legacy in support of Chesapeake Bay restoration is honored through this renaming.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 73.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.