

Testimony of the American Chemistry Council
Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee
On House Bill 1069

February 24, 2021

Chairman Barve, Delegate Stein and member of the Committee.

My name is Steve Risotto and I am a Senior Director at the American Chemistry Council. ACC recognizes the challenge that Maryland faces in ensuring the safety of private wells that supply drinking water for 13 percent of state residents. We believe that the fund to be established by HB 1069, and the process for providing grants to residents that it would create, address a gap in the state's efforts to ensure the safety of the drinking water supply.

ACC wishes to offer two minor amendments to the legislation as introduced that we believe will strengthen the bill and provide for a more effective and efficient implementation of the program it would establish. Our amendments address the definition of water quality testing in Part 1 of the bill.

First, we recommend that testing of private wells be conducted using analytical methods that have been validated by the US Environmental Protection Agency or by a similar state process. Such validation helps to ensure that the results are accurate and reproducible and will help to minimize the potential for false positive or negative results. The approach taken in collecting, storing, and preparing a water sample for analysis can affect the results and needs to be standardized to minimize the potential impact. In addition, the methods to be used for the analysis must be specified to provide for a consistent level of accuracy.

In addition, we recommend that the inclusion of "other contaminants" in (h)(2)(VI) of Part 1 be revised to limit the scope to substances for which acceptable levels have been properly defined. We have suggested inclusion of those contaminants for which a health advisory has been established under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, but recognize that the state may conduct comparable reviews that could also be included. We are concerned that, without more robust criteria for inclusion under the legislation, the testing could become unfocused and fail to address identified health priorities.

Thank you for your attention. I would be happy to answer any questions.