



Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies, Inc.

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

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March 4, 2024

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The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller State Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support with Amendments -- SB 969 (Stream and Watershed Restoration-Stream Restoration Contractor Licensing and Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Restoration and Funding (Whole Watershed Act))

Dear Chairman Feldman:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies (MAMWA), I am writing to convey MAMWA's support with amendments for SB 969, which would do two primary things: (1) create a Stream Restoration Contractors Licensing Board and (2) create a Whole Watershed Fund Partnership which would allow a State Management Team to fund environmental restoration projects.

MAMWA is a statewide association of local governments and wastewater treatment agencies that serve approximately 95% of the State's sewer population. MAMWA members own and operate wastewater treatment plants that are capital-intensive and need regular maintenance and upgrades to comply with strict environmental requirements, to serve local customers, and to protect the environment. MAMWA members rely on the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) for plant and conveyance system upgrades, combined sewer overflow abatement, and sewer system rehabilitation.

MAMWA requests an amendment that would clarify that payments from the BRF for wastewater upgrades would be prioritized over sending funds to the Whole Watershed Fund (p. 8, l. 25-26). This prioritization is already in the Environment Article, for example, with regard to the Clean Water Commerce Act ("After funding any eligible costs identified under item (iv)(1) and (2) of this paragraph, for transfers to the Clean Water Commerce Act in accordance with paragraph (3) of this subsection;"). (§9-1605.2(i)(2)(xiv)).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at Lisa@AquaLaw.com or 804-716-9021.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Ochsenhirt, MAMWA Deputy General Counsel

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, SB 969 Sponsors

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