



EASTON UTILITIES

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February 18, 2025

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
From: Easton Utilities Commission
Bill: SB 732 – Sewage Sludge Utilization Permits – Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances – Concentration Limits
Position: Oppose

On behalf of Easton Utilities Commission (EUC), a small municipally-owned utility and telecommunications company operating the electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, cable TV, and internet services for the Town of Easton and portions of the surrounding area, I am writing to share our concerns with **SB 732**.

SB 732 would direct the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to issue sewage sludge utilization permits for agricultural land application with a limit of one microgram per kilogram for PFOS or PFOA.

EUC relies on a viable biosolids land application program to manage the residuals that remain after the treatment process. **SB 732** would drive up costs for our ratepayers. If biosolids land application is effectively banned, we will be forced to find alternatives either out-of-state or at landfills. Our estimates show our current annual biosolids management budget would increase by approximately \$80,000. That may seem like a small number, but for EUC it represents a doubling of that expense. As a local utility, we have no choice but to pass those costs on to our ratepayers, at a time when they are already facing increased cost for essentials like food, housing, and transportation.

We also believe **SB 732** is unnecessary. The State's wastewater treatment plants are currently working with MDE on implementing last year's Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Control Act. This important work is focused on PFAS sources—which are not local wastewater plants—to reduce the level of PFAS loadings from those industries into local plants. In addition, MDE has a new policy in place that recommends that additional steps be taken if biosolids with more than 20 ppb will be land applied. In short, there is good work underway to address PFOS and PFOA levels in biosolids, and this bill would disrupt those efforts.

As a member of the MD Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies we also support MAMWA's comments on this bill and encourage Committee members to review them carefully.

For the reasons state above and in concert with MAMWA, we respectfully urge an **Unfavorable Report** for **SB 732**.

Please contact Kurt Fuchs with any questions at kfuchs@eucmail.com or 443-786-0855.