

**BENJAMIN BROOKS**  
*Legislative District 10*  
Baltimore County

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Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee  
  
Energy Subcommittee

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Chair, Joint Electric Universal  
Service Program Workgroup



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 96**  
**Environment – Water Bottle Filling Stations - Requirement**

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
February 11, 2025

Chair Feldman, Vice-chair Kagan, members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB 96, Environment - Water Bottle Filling Stations – Requirement. The purpose of this bill is to increase access to clean drinking water for all Marylanders by requiring the installation of water bottle filling stations in certain new or renovated buildings. By promoting sustainability, reducing plastic waste, and ensuring easy access to water, this legislation offers a forward-thinking solution to two pressing issues: the need for accessible drinking water and the environmental impact of single-use plastic bottles.

Plastic waste, particularly from disposable water bottles, has become a major environmental concern, polluting our waterways and contributing to landfill overflow. At the same time, easy access to clean, potable water is essential for public health. Water bottle filling stations provide an effective, eco-friendly alternative by allowing individuals to refill their personal bottles, reducing the need for single-use plastic. However, such stations are not universally available, particularly in older buildings and in communities with fewer resources.

SB 96 will require the installation of water bottle filling stations in all new construction where a drinking fountain is mandated under the current International Plumbing Code, state law, or local regulations. The bill will also require the installation of these stations when existing drinking fountains are replaced during building renovations and that they are connected to the potable water distribution and sanitary drainage systems. The Maryland Department of Labor will be tasked with adopting regulations to ensure the proper implementation and enforcement of this critical legislation.

Maryland must lead the way on encouraging the use of refillable water containers and reducing our reliance on disposable plastic bottles. Additionally, water bottle filling stations are an affordable, simple way to provide a healthier option to sugary drinks in spaces like schools, offices, airports, and shopping centers. By enacting SB 96, Maryland will have the opportunity to modernize its public infrastructure, reduce plastic waste, and make clean drinking water more accessible to all.

For these reasons, I strongly urge a favorable report on SB 96.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the phrase "With kindest regards,".

Benjamin Brooks