

**Senator Paul G. Pinsky**  
**Chairman, Education, Health, and Environmental Committee**  
**Maryland General Assembly**  
**February 18, 2020**

**Re: SB 671: Bay Restoration Fund- Allocation of Fees**

**Support**

Dear Senator Pinsky:

I would like to submit comments in favor of SB 671. I reside in Carroll County, but for over 28 years I was involved in local environmental health regulation- first as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist for Frederick County (16.5 years); and later in a similar capacity with the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (the delegated authority for on-site sewage disposal matters). I retired in 2018 as Manager of the Well & Septic Section at MCDPS. I have resided my entire life in homes that were (are) served by individual well and septic systems.

In my professional career, I worked with thousands of homeowners who were faced with the financially-draining expense of septic system replacements. Many of these properties required innovative or alternative systems that cost \$30,000 to \$45000. Very few homeowners have the financial reserve to afford these installations.

Fortunately, the Bay Restoration Fund has served to soften the financial pain. But many counties exhaust their BRF funds early in the year and cannot accommodate all that are in need. The Maryland General Assembly has used considerable flexibility with these funds to maximize the environmental improvements. BRF funding has shifted back and forth from septic systems to cover crops; and of course, the majority of MD municipal waste water treatment plants have been upgraded to a high state of treatment.

SB671 will leverage BRF funds to allow many lower income homeowners to replace their failing septic systems. I ask for a favorable report from the Committee on this bill.

Sincerely,

Gene von Gunten  
Westminster, MD

