

SB 880 Talking Points - Baltimore Regional Water Governance Task Force

- Good afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,
- For the record, I am Senator Jill ^{P.}_h Carter, chair of the Baltimore City Senate Delegation, and I'm proud to join my Baltimore County Senate Delegation counterpart, Senator Sydnor, to present Senate Bill 880.
- For more than 90 years, Baltimore City has operated and managed the water supply system within and outside of its borders. Baltimore City has a long history as a population center, a hub of innovation, and a thriving economic center. Baltimore City's water system, when it was first established, serviced around 250,000 residents. Today, our water system now provides service to nearly 1.8 million residential and business consumers across Baltimore City and 5 surrounding jurisdictions.
- Water is a human right and simply providing access to water and sewerage services isn't enough – it is our obligation to put in place legislation that gives our residents access to long-term quality services while protecting one of their most basic needs.
- SB 880 would create the Baltimore Regional Water Governance Task Force, which will allow for an in-depth analysis of the operations and management of the water and wastewater system and calls upon the task force to provide a recommendation to the Mayor, Baltimore County Executive, Governor, and General Assembly.
- This bill also ensure that the recommendations made reflect the specific needs of the Baltimore Region. The task force would be charged with examining other governance models to identify options that will improve efficiency, ensure equity, and lead to a better customer experience for residents throughout the region.
- This task force is a step in the right direction toward ensuring that the future of our water utility reflects the growing regional need of its customers.

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- There is power in partnership and the formation of this task force is a key step to securing a better future for our residents and a more efficient governance structure for our shared water resources.
- For those reasons I request a favorable report for SB 880.