

February 21, 2023

Dear Sen. Feldman, Chair of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

I am writing on behalf of BlueConduit in support of SB0513, which will be heard in your committee on Thursday, February 23, 2023.

SB0513 calls for a statewide open data platform focused on water quality data. SB-0153 falls squarely in line with federal funding directives. The passage of this legislation is paramount for ensuring equitable and efficient resource allocation, bringing transparency to water access, and allowing Maryland residents an avenue to participate in both the provision and protection of water services.

SB0513 mandates the data be made publicly available through the Open Water Data Reporting Platform. Here, access to data will enable accountability, civil involvement at project-level, and incorporation with existing tools like MD EJScreen and MDE EJ Screening Tool which lack data on drinking and wastewater, and enables Maryland to implement equitable decision making and alignment with federally mandated Justice40 goals.

While the EPA regulations require all water systems to provide a publicly accessible full service line inventory on both the public and private side of the water line, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides funding to replace lead service lines, there is no regulatory framework to ensure these federal programs work concurrently. SB0513 creates a future use case for the water quality data Maryland's Department of the Environment will start receiving via the Lead and Copper Rule inventories from water systems across the state.

BlueConduit, the pioneer in using predictive modeling to locate and map lead service lines, applauds the intent of the bill. Our work is rooted in good data, public health, and transparent communication to all stakeholders; it is rare to see legislation attempting to codify these values in state programming.

BlueConduit serves over 100 water systems in using predictive modeling to reduce the number of unknown service line materials, convert this data into public facing maps, and think about using their water data to build good relationships with their consumers. BlueConduit continues to see the value of strategic investments in data programs to effectively communicate and report on highly sensitive public health issues.

If you would like to hear more about BlueConduit and our success across the United States and Canada, please don't hesitate to contact Sheela Lal at [sheela@blueconduit.com](mailto:sheela@blueconduit.com). We would be happy to provide thought leadership or testimony on such matters.

We encourage the committee to vote "yea" on this bill.