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February 26, 2023

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Environment & Transportation Committee
Room 251 - House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB 848: Drinking Water - Innovative Potable Reuse Pilot Program - Establishment

Dear Chair Barve and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Town of Centreville supports HB 848: Drinking Water - Innovative Potable Reuse Pilot Program – Establishment. Water reuse has been around since 1976 and continues to expand. The concept is newer to Maryland and can move the State from prolonged transactional improvement to transformational change with enduring technological and environmental advancements.

Water Reuse has been used on the west coast for decades, primarily out of necessity. Further east, the City of Wichita Falls, Texas, brought a plant online in 2018 with a maximum discharge capacity of 16 Mgalpd because of a drought emergency. And in Maryland, the Town of Walkersville uses these filtration technologies after a sewer line rupture in 1999 and a manure spill in 2008. The benefit will have a broad reach in Maryland, from municipalities with water shortages, such as the City of Westminster, to the Bay and Coastal areas where saltwater intrusion has begun to impact the aquifers.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is aware of these efforts. Over half of the State's water reuse is spray irrigation, and a further 32% is for cooling water. Only 13% is groundwater recharge. MDE has stated that due to climate change, more frequent and heavier rainfall will dramatically impact spray irrigation. The effluent goes to the Bay when a plant cannot spray, and buffering is exceeded. More immediate is the cost of spray irrigation. In our efforts, the Town of Centreville is looking at a minimum of \$3M for a field and a further \$1M per mile of pipe to reach that field. It is not fiscally sustainable for small municipalities.

SB 0392 will look to install \$10M in grants for wastewater facilities. This is much-needed support that may go very quickly based on demand. That money would be well served in replaceable and upgradeable filtering technologies and reuse infrastructure. Unfortunately, its benefits toward the older models of water reuse have no enduring benefit.

We are offering our support to this innovative pilot program as it has benefits statewide, the technology is well proven, with an abundance of supporting data, and it works as an enduring solution for a rapidly emerging challenge.

The Town of Centreville ask this committee for a favorable report on HB 848. If you have any questions concerning this testimony, please contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles M. Koogle
Town Manager, Centreville Md.