



POTOMAC RIVERKEEPER[®] NETWORK

SB0956

Protecting State Waters From PFAS Pollution Act

Feb 20, 2024

FAVORABLE

Chairman Feldman and Honorable members of the Committee,

I am here today to advocate for a favorable position on SB956, a crucial bill that seeks to protect public wastewater facilities from the impacts of PFAS pollution originating from industry. This legislation is a necessary step to ensure that the burden of cleaning up PFAS pollution does not fall on the shoulders of the public and our valuable wastewater utilities.

PFAS, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are toxic chemicals that have been widely used in industrial processes and consumer products for decades. These persistent and harmful chemicals have now been found in the water supplies of communities across the country, posing serious health risks to those who consume contaminated water.

The costs associated with removing PFAS in a pre-treatment program should not be the responsibility of the public wastewater facilities and the general public. Instead, the industries that discharge waste containing PFAS should bear the financial burden of mitigating their own pollution. It is unfair to expect taxpayers and wastewater utilities to foot the bill for the cleanup of a problem that was created by industry.

By passing SB956, Maryland can take a proactive stance in holding industries accountable for the removal of PFAS. Requiring these industries to invest in pre-treatment technologies to remove PFAS pollution before it enters the public wastewater facilities is a critical step in protecting public health and the environment. Additionally, placing the financial responsibility on the industries that produce and discharge PFAS pollution will help to prevent public waste utilities from increasing fees on the public and businesses.

Furthermore, this legislation sets a clear standard for environmental responsibility and sustainability. By ensuring that industries are accountable for their role in removal of PFAS pollution, we are sending a message that Maryland is committed to protecting its water resources and public health.

In conclusion, I urge you to support SB956 and stand up for the protection of public wastewater facilities and the public from the impacts of PFAS pollution. By holding industries accountable for their pollution and requiring them to invest in pre-treatment technologies, we can safeguard our water resources and prevent unnecessary financial burdens on the public. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brent Walls, Upper Potomac Riverkeeper