

**MD HB 1055 Bill Senate Testimony Letter IWLA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Abby Hileman

Position: FAV



The Senate of Maryland  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 25, 2024

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 1055.

The Izaak Walton League of America supports HB 1055 to provide transparency of State Agencies, Counties and Municipalities throughout Maryland to maintain and report records of road salt application for the previous winter season.

As one of the oldest conservation organizations in the United States, the Izaak Walton League of America (the League) has worked to protect the nation's soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife for over 100 years. Since 2018, the League's Salt Watch program has provided access for community scientists to monitor local waterways nation-wide for road salt pollution, encouraged volunteers to advocate for smarter road salting practices, and provided training and resources to road salt applicators, property managers, and individual residents.

The League is in favor of HB 1055. Recording and reporting the amount of road salt applied annually by each state agency, county, and municipality is a vital starting point for understanding how much road salt is being applied across the state and where improvements can be made to reduce road salt pollution without sacrificing safety. Keeping and reporting records of road salt usage is a specific, measurable, and attainable action that will begin to provide transparency on a legacy pollutant that is creating toxic aquatic conditions and threatening human health.

We urge the Committee to provide this legislation with a favorable report.

Respectfully,

Abby Hileman  
Salt Watch Coordinator  
Izaak Walton League of America

# **ARF FAV crossfile HB1055 Salt Application.pdf**

Uploaded by: Elle Bassett

Position: FAV



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## Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 1055 Environment – Highways – Salt Application

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
March 26, 2024

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT OF HB1055**, on behalf of Arundel Rivers Federation. Arundel Rivers is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection, preservation, and restoration of the South, West and Rhode Rivers with over 3,500 supporters. Our mission is to work with local communities to achieve clean, fishable, and swimmable waterways for present and future generations.

House Bill 1055 will require our state agencies, counties, and municipalities to maintain records of highway salt application during the winter. This will provide clarity on the total amount of salt applied within our communities. This bill will bring Maryland up to speed on tracking this issue. Other states that have taken action such as creating salt applicator certifications or education programs include Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, and New Hampshire.

Runoff from winter road salting can increase the conductivity of our waterways, altering ecosystems and negatively impacting freshwater species in streams, creeks, and ponds. According to the EPA, “road salt can contaminate drinking water, kill or endanger wildlife, increase soil erosion, and damage private and public property.”<sup>1</sup> This bill is an important step in better understanding the current practices of applying road salt within our state, so that we might better understand the impacts.

Arundel Rivers Federation strongly supports protecting, preserving, and restoring water quality within the Chesapeake Bay and we respectfully request a **FAVORABLE REPORT on HB1055**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elle Bassett".

Elle Bassett  
South, West and Rhode Riverkeeper  
Arundel Rivers Federation

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Protection Agency. “Winter is Coming! And with it, tons of salt on our roads. 2020.  
<https://www.epa.gov/snep/winter-coming-and-it-tons-salt-our-roads>

**HB1055 - SHA - Salt Applications - LOI\_FINAL\_CO.pd**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 1055 – Environment – Highways - Salt Application***

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information for the Committee's consideration of House Bill 1055.

As amended, House Bill 1055 requires each State agency, county, and municipality to maintain records of each highway salt application made for the winter weather season and submit a report on the annual highway salt application for the previous fiscal year to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) by July 1 of each year. The report must include the total amount of salt applied by the State agency, county, or municipality, as well as the amount of salt the jurisdiction had at the beginning of the fiscal year.

As the party responsible for winter operations on State highways, it is the State Highway Administration's (SHA) duty to provide safe and well-maintained roads during winter storms in a cost-effective and environmentally sensitive manner. In recent years, SHA has focused efforts on reducing road salt usage and promoting environmentally friendly practices during winter operations. SHA's practices have been reviewed by a nationally recognized team of winter operations experts and, as a result of their findings, SHA has implemented best practices such as: 1) proactive anti-icing activities, 2) close monitoring of salt application rates used by SHA and its contractors, and 3) increased personnel training in salting operations. Further testing and deployment of new materials, equipment, and strategies will help SHA implement best practices that balance safety, environmental stewardship, and cost containment.

Many of the best practices currently in place form the basis for the Statewide Salt Management Plan created by SHA, in conjunction with MDE. As amended, SHA believes it can meet the requirements of this bill. Currently, SHA already reports on road salt usage in its Annual MS-4 Permit Overview Report. When reporting year-to-year comparisons of road salt usage, SHA uses a standard of pounds of road salt per total lane miles per inch of snow (lbs/lm/inch), which accounts for variability in winter weather activity between years. In Fiscal Year 2023, SHA applied 643 lbs/lm/in, of salt, a reduction of 24 lbs/lm/in relative to the fiscal 2022 reporting period.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations of House Bill 1055.

Sincerely,

Matthew Mickler  
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Office of Policy and Research  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
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Director  
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