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February 28, 2025

Legislative Position: Favorable w/Amendments
House Bill 1360
Environment - Road Salt - Outdoor Storage
House Environment and Transportation

Dear Chairman Korman and members of the committee:

Established in 1950, the Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland, Inc. (AUC) is dedicated to advancing the utility contracting industry across the state. Our mission is to foster strong relationships between utility contractors and their clients, uphold the highest professional standards within the industry, and elevate the reputation of utility professionals within the business community. We actively advocate for public policies that address industry challenges and contribute to improving Maryland's overall business environment.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our thoughts on HB 1360, Environment - Road Salt - Outdoor Storage. Our organization understands the intent of the bill and supports the effort to ensure responsible storage of road salt. However, we would like to offer some suggestions for improvement.

While we agree that proper storage of road salt is essential, we are concerned that the bill's language may be overly broad. We respectfully request that the Committee consider narrowing the direction to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to ensure that the regulations adopted are reasonable and feasible for contractors to implement.

Our primary concern is that the department may issue regulations that require onerous and costly measures, such as constructing permanent covered buildings. We believe that such requirements would be unnecessary and burdensome for our members, who are small businesses. We would suggest an amendment that would clarify the intent of the legislation and provide more guidance to MDE on the development of regulations. Specifically, we suggest adding language that directs MDE to consider the economic and practical feasibility of the regulations, as well as the potential impact on small businesses and contractors.

Furthermore, this raises the natural questions on the necessity of the bill. If road salt is left uncovered outdoors and exposed to rain, it dissolves and washes away, resulting in a financial loss for the operator. Contractors are

already incentivized to store road salt in a way that minimizes waste and protects the environment, as they are likely spreading salt for supplemental income to their regular business.

In conclusion, we support the intent of HB 1360 and are willing to work with the Committee to ensure that the bill is effective and reasonable. We believe that with some clarification, this legislation can achieve its goals without placing undue burdens on contractors and small businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland