

RESILIENCE AUTHORITY

Annapolis and Anne Arundel County

Veronique Bugnion
Board Chair
Anne Arundel County

Testimony in Support of HB1296 - Managed Aquifer Recharge Pilot Program

Nate Betnun
Board Vice Chair
City of Annapolis

February 25th, 2025

Teresa Sutherland
Board Treasurer
Anne Arundel County

*Chairman Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce and Environment and Transportation
Committee Members:*

Emily Clifton
Board Secretary
Anne Arundel County

On behalf of the Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County I am writing to express our support for House Bill 1296, which seeks to establish the Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Pilot Program. This initiative is crucial for enhancing the resilience of our drinking water supply in the face of climate change and other environmental challenges.

Jamie Benoit
Anne Arundel County

Mariah Davis
City of Annapolis

The Resilience Authority was established in 2021 with a mission to coordinate and implement projects that bolster environmental and community resilience. We are committed to advancing infrastructure projects that mitigate climate change impacts, leveraging public and private investments to drive demand for resilience infrastructure throughout Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

David Jarrell
Anne Arundel County

Jared Littmann
City of Annapolis

Stacy Schaeffer
Anne Arundel County

Groundwater is a critical resource for Maryland, particularly in Anne Arundel County, where it accounts for 100% of our drinking water supply. However, this vital resource is increasingly stressed due to population growth, urban development, and the impacts of climate change. Current withdrawal rates exceed natural replenishment, posing a risk of long-term depletion if proactive measures are not taken.

Mike Sewell
Anne Arundel County

Other states, such as California, Florida, and Texas, have successfully implemented MAR programs to enhance groundwater supplies and combat issues like saltwater intrusion. For example, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District and Hillsborough County, Florida, have used reclaimed water to protect and replenish groundwater

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supplies effectively. These programs provide valuable models for Maryland as we seek to safeguard our water resources.

While Maryland has not yet faced groundwater depletion as severe as in those states, levels are declining. House Bill 1296 presents an opportunity for the State to adopt a proactive and collaborative approach in exploring MAR technologies before water scarcity becomes a more significant crisis.

The passage of HB1296 would empower the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to oversee and regulate MAR projects, ensuring they are implemented safely and effectively. This initiative will foster partnerships between local jurisdictions and the state to conduct applied scientific research and pilot programs. By collecting data and validating the Pilot's effectiveness, we can develop informed regulations and guidelines to support sustainable groundwater management.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1296. Your support will be instrumental in ensuring the resilience and sustainability of our water resources for future generations.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabe Cohee', written in a cursive style.

Gabe Cohee
Resilience Authority Director of Programs