



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

DIVISION OF WATER AND SEWER UTILITIES

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

Mark A. Schweitzer, Director

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: OPPOSE -- HB 909 (Sewage Sludge Utilization Permits - Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances - Concentration Limits)

Dear Chairman Korman:

On behalf of **Frederick County**, I am writing to share serious concerns with HB 909, which would direct the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to issue sewage sludge utilization permits for agricultural land application with a limit of 1 microgram per kilogram for PFOS or PFOA. **Frederick County** is a Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies (MAMWA) Member and we rely on a viable biosolids land application program to manage the residuals that remain after the treatment process at our plant(s). We support MAMWA's comments on this bill and encourage Committee members to review them carefully.

HB 909 would impact our plants and would **drive up costs significantly for our ratepayers**. If biosolids land application is effectively banned, we will be forced to find alternatives either out-of-state or at landfills. We fully anticipate that, if there are even options available (which may not be the case), our current annual biosolids management budget of **\$3.1 million** will increase to approximately **\$4.6 million**. As a local utility, we have no choice but to pass those costs on to our ratepayers, which we do not want to do, especially when they are facing on-going inflationary pressure on essentials like food, housing, transportation, and energy costs.

HB 909 is also **unnecessary**. The State's wastewater treatment plants are working right now with MDE on implementing last year's Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Control Act. This important work is focused on PFAS sources – which are unequivocally not local wastewater plants – to reduce the level of PFAS loadings from those industries into local plants. In addition, MDE has a new policy in place that recommends that additional steps be taken if biosolids with more than 20 ppb will be land applied. In short, there is good work underway to address PFOS and PFOA levels in biosolids, and this work will be disrupted by HB 909.

Frederick County: Rich History, Bright Future

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Frederick County is aware that MAMWA representatives have held discussions with staff from the Maryland Department of Environment and the bill sponsor to share our concerns on this bill and are actively discussing amendments to address them.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at MSchweitzer@FrederickCountyMD.gov or 301-600-2296.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Schweitzer
Director

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee Members
HB 9009 Sponsor

The Honorable Marc Korman

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