



March 27, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

Maryland American Water strongly supports **HB 1164**. Our company has served Maryland homes and businesses with safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water since the early 1930s. Over the last decade, we have invested approximately \$42 million to upgrade and replace drinking water infrastructure in Maryland. Today, we serve approximately 24,000 people in Harford and Anne Arundel counties, and our footprint will nearly double later this year with our acquisition of Maryland Water Service, which provides water and wastewater service in parts of Harford, Anne Arundel and Allegany counties.

All stakeholders benefit from a financially stable utility providing safe, reliable, and affordable service to its customers, and we believe it is in the public interest to design rates that make water and wastewater service affordable for as many customers as possible. In current state code, Maryland's electric and natural gas utilities have the ability to provide limited income mechanisms to their customers. This legislation extends this ability to water and wastewater utilities. In addition, many of Maryland American Water's affiliates in other states provide some form of limited income mechanism, including in the neighboring states of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Maryland's water and wastewater utilities should have the ability to make similar low-income mechanisms available to Maryland residents as well.

We also look forward to continued discussions around rate consolidation, which was proposed in the original version of the bill but removed in committee in the House. Consolidating the rates of all customers of a utility, rather than establishing separate rates for different districts, is another very important tool in improving affordability. Rate consolidation creates benefits for all customers in the long run by spreading infrastructure investment over the total customer base, which in turn results in long-term rate stability.

We urge passage of HB 1164 to promote affordability of water and wastewater services to Marylanders and look forward to continued discussion on policies that encourage much-needed investment in critical utility infrastructure while maintaining affordable rates.

Sincerely,

Laura E. Runkle

Laura E. Runkle
President, Maryland American Water