

February 20, 2026

Senator Brian Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support for SB 719 – Sewage Sludge – Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances – Regulation

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Pam Meister. I am a Baltimore County resident, a mother of three, and a survivor of a rare form of non-Hodgkin lymphoma that was discovered incidentally and from an unknown origin.

When you receive a diagnosis like that, your mind goes to two places. First: why? And second: what could I have done differently, and what can I do now to stay healthy for my children?

The hard truth is that there is often no clear answer. But what I have learned is this: while we cannot control everything, we can reduce known risks where they exist.

SB 719 does exactly that.

This bill restricts the land application of sewage sludge containing elevated levels of PFAS, specifically PFOA and PFOS, chemicals that persist in our environment and have been linked to serious health risks. It sets clear concentration thresholds, prohibits land application at higher levels, requires monitoring and testing, and mandates source tracking and mitigation plans when contamination exceeds certain limits. It also allows the Department and local authorities to establish pretreatment standards to reduce PFAS at the source before they enter our wastewater systems.

This is thoughtful, preventative policy. It reduces the risk of these persistent chemicals entering agricultural land, groundwater, and ultimately our food and water supply.

It may seem incremental. But when you have faced a life-altering diagnosis, incremental protection matters. Reducing exposure to known environmental risks matters. Protecting soil, water, and communities matters.

As a mother, I do what I can to maintain my health and protect my children. Supporting policies that reduce known health risks and strengthen environmental safeguards is part of that commitment.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 719.

Sincerely,

Pam Meister
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