



SB719: Sewage Sludge – Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances - Regulation
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 24, 2026

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action respectfully requests a favorable report on SB719 to establish a limit on toxic PFAS found in sewage sludge (biosolids) that is spread on Maryland's farm fields, as well as identify and mitigate upstream sources of PFAS pollution before it is co-mingled with other wastes in our wastewater treatment plants.

PFAS are a class of more than 12,000 chemicals that are used to make products resist grease, oil, water, or heat. They are commonly found in cookware, cosmetics, clothing, carpets, firefighting foams, and many other products. They are also widely used in industrial processes, where they are passed down to wastewater treatment plants. They remain present in the biosolids which are marketed to farmers as fertilizer.

PFAS chemicals are a public health concern and are linked to a wide range of public health concerns including weaker immune systems, cancer, cholesterol, pregnancy-induced hypertension, liver damage, reduced fertility, and thyroid disease.

The EPA's January 2025 draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment highlights severe risks at levels as low as 1-5 parts per billion. SB719 includes tiers to manage PFAS contaminated sewage sludge at:

- >50 ppb: land application allowed
- 25-49 ppb: mitigation plan required with temporary management requirements
- <25 ppb: no restrictions

SB719 offers higher limits to PFAS contamination than in the EPA assessment, so while we look at SB719 as a meaningful step towards reducing contaminated sludge application and reducing upstream sources, it is not a panacea for PFAS pollution.

We appreciate that the bill includes source tracking, industrial pretreatment standards, and a polluter pays model.

SB719 reflects significant work from various stakeholders and when enacted will meaningfully reduce PFAS application and provide the state with an important framework to reduce upstream PFAS discharges.

Thank you and we urge a favorable report with a reduced threshold for application,

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