



SB0719

Sewage Sludge - Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances – Regulation Testimony before Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Hearing February 24, 2026

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Caitlin Roe, and I represent the 1700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of SB0719** which would restrict land applications of sewage sludge containing total concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances greater than certain levels. We thank Senator Love and Senator Hester for introducing this bill.

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, also referred to as PFAS, are types of synthetic chemicals that studies have shown to pose significant dangers to human health. PFAS are also referred to as “forever chemicals” due to their persistence in the environment and their ability to accumulate over time. They have been linked to serious health problems such as cancer, developmental and reproductive issues, immune problems and metabolic issues. According to an article concerning PFAS from NYU Langone Health¹, “The resulting economic burden is estimated to cost Americans a minimum of \$5.5 billion and as much as \$63 billion annually.” In Maryland, sewage sludge containing PFAS is used as fertilizer and spread on farms. This has the potential to contaminate groundwater, fish and wildlife, and milk, fruits and vegetables. With such serious health and economic effects, the spread of PFAS by sewage sludge must be taken seriously.

This bill would work to lower the amount of PFAS in the environment and work to mitigate the highest water treatment systems contributions of PFAS at the source. This bill targets sewage sludge with the highest levels of PFAS, and it gives a reasonable timeline of up to two years to mitigate those at the source. Indivisible Howard County supports this bill and believes it would work to improve the health of Marylanders and reduce the economic burden people in Maryland will likely face as a result of PFAS.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Caitlin Roe
Hanover, Maryland

¹ *Sources Cited:* <https://nyulangone.org/news/daily-exposure-forever-chemicals-costs-united-states-billions-health-costs>