



Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies, Inc.

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

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February 20, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS -- SB 719 (Sewage Sludge – Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances - Regulation)

Dear Chair Feldman:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies (MAMWA), I am writing to **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS SB 719**, which would restrict the land application of sewage sludge (biosolids) if PFOS and PFOA in the biosolids reach certain threshold levels.

MAMWA is a statewide association of local governments and wastewater treatment agencies that serve approximately 95% of the State's sewer population. An integral part of the treatment process involves generating sewage sludge, which is then treated to become biosolids; the State's wastewater treatment plants generate over 100,000 dry tons of biosolids per year, with a large percentage of that biosolids land applied on farms.

Before turning to substantive comments, MAMWA would like to thank bill sponsors Senator Love and Delegate Stein for engaging with MAMWA and many of our individual Members during the interim between the 2025 and 2026 Sessions. We welcome the opportunity to participate in future discussions on how best to balance PFAS reductions with affordability concerns. MAMWA's goal is to work to ensure that the legislation considers the financial feasibility of alternatives if there are land application restrictions, gives wastewater plants enough time to tackle this tough challenge, and provides adequate financial resources to do so. Wastewater plants do not create PFAS—**our customers and your constituents** should not be asked to bear the full burden of solving this Statewide issue. MAMWA will be submitting separate testimony in **SUPPORT** of **SB 686** for this reason.

MAMWA Members are actively participating in efforts to reduce PFAS loadings to their sewer systems in response to the Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Act (Md. Code, ENV. § 9-343, et seq.). If SB 719 passes, MAMWA Members will also be working to implement its requirements. This work cannot be done overnight. In the interim, while wastewater treatment plants are tracking PFAS sources and

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working with industrial customers to reduce levels, plants must have a viable and reasonable biosolids land application program.

MAMWA requests amendments to SB 719 that would give wastewater treatment plants the necessary time to conduct source tracking studies and implement mitigation plans, while still allowing for land application under reasonable conditions. If plants cannot continue to land apply while this work is underway, they will have no reasonable, cost-effective options for managing this material. Theoretically, biosolids can be landfilled or incinerated, but landfill capacity and incinerator availability is very limited and would be extremely costly as compared to land application. Any increased costs that a wastewater treatment plant incurs would unfortunately be passed on to **our customers and your constituents**.

For these reasons, MAMWA urges the Committee to **AMEND** SB 719 to provide additional protections for local wastewater treatment plants. MAMWA's requested amendments are attached.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at Lisa@AquaLaw.com or 804-716-9021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa M. Ochsenhirt".

Lisa M. Ochsenhirt
MAMWA Deputy General Counsel

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members, SB 719 Sponsors

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 719
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 5, in line 7, after “APPLICATION”, add “IN MARYLAND”;

Bill Text:

(B) THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO SEWAGE SLUDGE AND PRODUCTS CONTAINING SEWAGE SLUDGE THAT ARE INTENDED FOR LAND APPLICATION.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

The current bill text is unclear regarding the geographic scope of the provisions. Generators assume this is limited to land application in the State of Maryland.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 5, in line 8, strike “2027”, and substitute “2029”;

Bill Text:

(C) ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 2027: (1) A PERSON MAY NOT APPLY SEWAGE SLUDGE OR A PRODUCT CONTAINING SEWAGE SLUDGE TO AGRICULTURAL OR MARGINAL LAND IF THE SEWAGE SLUDGE OR PRODUCT CONTAINING SEWAGE SLUDGE HAS A TOTAL CONCENTRATION OF REGULATED PFAS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN 50 PARTS PER BILLION;

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

Generators with biosolids that have PFAS levels in the middle tier (equal to or greater than 25 ppb but less than 50 ppb) will need two years before the tiered system is put in place to solicit and procure the necessary contracts to meet the additional management measures.

AMENDMENT NO. 3

On page 5, in line 20, strike beginning with “ON” through “2029,” and substitute “**DURING THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOURCE TRACKING STUDY AND MITIGATION PLAN IN SUBSECTION (F), AND**”;

Bill Text:

(D) (1) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30, 2029, SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBSECTION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS: (1) A PERSON MAY BLEND SEWAGE SLUDGE FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO REDUCE THE TOTAL CONCENTRATION OF REGULATED PFAS IN THE FINAL MATERIAL TO LEVELS BELOW 25 PARTS PER BILLION;

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

SB 719 prohibits the use of blending to reduce PFAS levels beginning on September 30, 2029. A generator should be authorized to blend its biosolids for as long as that generator is developing and implementing its source tracking and mitigation plans. A generator should not be required to seek out costly (or even unavailable) alternatives to land application while undertaking this work because of an arbitrary end-date.

AMENDMENT NO. 4

On page 5, in line 23, after “SOURCES” add “**,OR MAY BLEND SEWAGE SLUDGE WITH NON-SEWAGE SLUDGE**”;

Bill Text:

(1) A PERSON MAY BLEND SEWAGE SLUDGE FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO REDUCE THE TOTAL CONCENTRATION OF REGULATED PFAS IN THE FINAL MATERIAL TO LEVELS BELOW 25 PARTS PER BILLION; AND

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

Many of Maryland’s generators blend biosolids with other materials to enhance the structure and carbon levels of the material. Please clarify the text to reflect this reality.

AMENDMENT NO. 5

On page 6, in line 5 strike “(G)” and substitute “(G)(4)”;

Bill Text:

(2) A PERSON THAT BLENDS OR OTHERWISE COMMINGLES SEWAGE SLUDGE FOR THE PURPOSE OF LAND APPLICATION SHALL MONITOR FOR THE PRESENCE OF PFOS AND PFOA AT LEAST ONCE PER MONTH, USING A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROTOCOLS ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

The text in subsection (G) is not a good fit for a blender, who may be a third-party contractor that is blending materials in a location that is not the wastewater treatment facility. In that case, a blender would not be sampling “at the point where sewage sludge leaves the wastewater treatment facility.” MAMWA submits it is cleaner to simply point to (G)(4) which allows MDE to establish monitoring requirements for blended materials.

AMENDMENT NO. 6

On page 6, in lines 19 and 20, strike beginning with “FOR” through “(F),” and substitute “DURING THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOURCE TRACKING STUDY AND MITIGATION PLAN IN SUBSECTION (F),”;

Bill Text:

(2) FOR A PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 12 MONTHS, AND PENDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF A MITIGATION PLAN UNDER SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, A PERSON MAY APPLY SEWAGE SLUDGE AND OTHER PRODUCTS DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO LAND:

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

The State’s generators assume the intent is to allow continued land application while the generator is implementing source tracking and mitigation plans. Please clarify the text.

AMENDMENT NO. 7

On page 6, in line 24, strike “**HECTARE**” and substitute “**ACRE**”;

Bill Text:

(2) FOR A PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 12 MONTHS, AND PENDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF A MITIGATION PLAN UNDER SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, A PERSON MAY APPLY SEWAGE SLUDGE AND OTHER PRODUCTS DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO LAND: (I) AT A RATE THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 3 DRY METRIC TONS PER HECTARE;

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

One of the additional management measures in SB 719 is biosolids application at a reduced rate of 3 dry metric tons per hectare. Biosolids land application is more commonly measured based on dry metric tons per acre. Translating 3 dry metric tons per hectare would result in a land application rate of approximately 1.2 dry metric tons per acre. Spreading equipment cannot physically apply at this level. As written, SB 719 would effectively create a de facto ban on land application for materials with PFAS levels equal to or greater than 25 ppb but less than 50 ppb. We do not believe this is the intent of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 8

On page 6, in line 30, after “**DEPARTMENT**” add “.” and strike beginning with “**AFTER**” in line 30 of page 6 through line 32 on page 6, inclusive;

Bill Text:

(2) FOR A PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 12 MONTHS, AND PENDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF A MITIGATION PLAN UNDER SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, A PERSON MAY APPLY SEWAGE SLUDGE AND OTHER PRODUCTS DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO LAND: (II) SUBJECT TO: (2) ADDITIONAL SETBACKS FOR LAND APPLICATION NEAR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY WELLS DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT AFTER CONSULTATION WITH ADJACENT LANDOWNERS AND COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS FROM EACH LOCAL JURISDICTION LOCATED WITHIN 1 MILE OF THE PROPERTY BOUNDARY.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

One of the additional management measures in SB 719 is additional setbacks for land application near public and private water supply wells developed by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) after consultation with adjacent landowners and local officials within 1 mile of the property boundary. MDE is the subject matter expert; MDE alone should be tasked with determining whether additional buffers are warranted after consulting with the generator.

AMENDMENT NO. 9

On page 7, in line 10, after “SUBSECTION” add “**NO LATER THAN APRIL 1, 2028.**”;

Bill Text:

(1) COMPLETE A SOURCE TRACKING STUDY IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

SB 719 does not have a firm deadline for submitting a source tracking study. Generators are committed to sustainable and cost-effective PFAS reductions and offer this deadline for clarity and in the spirit of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 10

On page 7, in lines 32 and 33, strike “,**NOT TO EXCEED TWO YEARS,**”;

Bill Text:

(4) (1) A MITIGATION PLAN DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL: 5. INCLUDE A REASONABLE TIMELINE, NOT TO EXCEED 2 YEARS, FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MITIGATION PLAN.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

This timeframe is too short. Generators will need well more than two years to implement a mitigation plan. We also believe industrial users will need more than two years to add needed treatment at their facilities to reduce PFAS levels.

AMENDMENT NO. 11

On page 9, after “OPTIONS” in line 3 add “**(III) IF THE COST OF IMPLEMENTING MITIGATION OPTIONS WILL INCREASE THE SEWAGE SERVICE RATES THE SEWAGE SLUDGE GENERATOR CHARGES ITS RESIDENTIAL RATEPAYERS FOR SEWER SERVICE BY MORE THAN A DE MINIMIS AMOUNT, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALLOW THE SEWAGE SLUDGE GENERATOR TO CONTINUE LAND APPLICATION OF SEWAGE SLUDGE, WITH NO SPECIFIED END DATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTIONS (D) AND (E) OF THIS SECTION**”;

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

A generator that develops an implementation plan that would be unreasonably expensive to implement should have an off-ramp from having to spend significant sums. The State’s POTWs want to keep sewer rates affordable for all Marylanders.

AMENDMENT NO. 12

On page 9, in line 25, after “QUARTERLY” add “**(IV) UPON REQUEST BY A SEWAGE SLUDGE GENERATOR WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED PFAS LEVELS BELOW 25 PPB FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT MAY REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF SAMPLING TO LESS THAN QUARTERLY**”;

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

A generator with biosolids that are consistently measuring below 25 ppb should be granted reduced monitoring to save unnecessary, indefinite sampling costs.

AMENDMENT NO. 13

On page 9, in lines 28 and 29, strike “**AND SUBJECT TO A LABORATORY LEVEL OF QUANTITATION FOR BIOSOLIDS ANALYSIS NOT TO EXCEED 2 PARTS PER BILLION**”;

Bill Text:

(3) (I) SAMPLES SHALL BE ANALYZED USING A METHOD APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND CONDUCTED BY A LABORATORY CERTIFIED TO PERFORM THE METHOD AND SUBJECT TO A LABORATORY LEVEL OF QUANTITATION FOR BIOSOLIDS ANALYSIS NOT TO EXCEED 2 PARTS PER BILLION.

Explanation for Requested Amendment:

We are not aware of any lab that has a level of quantitation this low. Requiring monitoring using EPA Method 1633 at a qualified lab should be sufficient to ensure samples are being appropriately managed.