

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair and EEE Committee Members,

For the record my name is Robin Ross, I reside in Lothian, Md in one of the four mobile home parks – Patuxent Mobile Home Community also known a Patuxent Shores.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee on SB940 on behalf of myself and other mobile home park residents and strongly support this amended bill.

I also want to thank Senator Shaneka Henson and Delegates Seth Howard and Jeffrie Long for bringing this bill before the Senate / House committees in our great state of Maryland, on behalf of their constituents.

By trade I have worked in the Commercial and Residential HVAC, Plumbing and electrical industries for the last 20+ years in systems design, installation, and service – dealing with geothermal and ground water sources – open and closed looped well water systems as well as potable well water systems. It is in this capacity and as a resident of the park that I am going to share with you examples of the conditions we have had to endure for years with our drinking water that is supplied by the park owners.

However, you will not see other residents here today, mostly because they are working – but also because they are fearful of retaliation from park owners for speaking out. If you and your family were experiencing the situations with the drinking water we receive in our homes, you would be speaking out too – as well as demanding action from state environment and health officials and regulators as well.

I have lived in Patuxent Mobile Estates for over six years; and I cannot tell you the number of times that we have gone for days without water – and that the park owners do not even let us know what is going on -- or provide a source of emergency water. Our calls to county and state offices have limited response – because these are private communities.

But the really big issue is the foul water that continually comes out of our faucets, is discolored, filled with iron, has granular debris and odors you can smell before you walk through the door. These situations last for days – you cannot use the water for bathing or washing clothes – let alone consume it.

I am also a certified Search and Rescue K9 Handler/trainer, serving in the industry for more than 20 years throughout MD, VA, DE, PA, and others as part of MD Task Force 1 My two K9 dogs became so ill from the water that they accidently drank – that they were near death, costing me thousands of dollars in vet bills. I will not use the water for anything. My neighbors have had to seek medical treatment for their children and themselves for intestinal issues as well as skin rashes and sores.

The reason these situations occur has to do with failures in the treatment system that is operated and poorly maintained by the park owners. The county and state environmental and health officials do not have the authority to make owners enforce the drinking water regulations and do proper treatment. The reason this occurs is because Maryland does not have the authority to enforce the secondary treatment regulations for private water suppliers.

On behalf of the residents in the area – as well as those throughout the state who are also dealing with drinking water issues, please give a favorable committee vote to this legislation – SB0729 and HB1196.

Thank you.

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