



Shaping Tomorrow's
Built Environment Today

**ASHRAE Testimony Supporting Maryland House Bill 204, Drinking Water –
Regulation – Control and Prevention of Waterborne Disease.
February 4, 2026**

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to provide remarks on this important and timely legislation.

My name is Bill McQuade, and I am the 2025-2026 ASHRAE Society President. I am an engineer with a BSME, MSME and MBA from Penn State University, and have been a member of the ASHRAE for 33 years.

ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, is a technical and professional society founded in 1894. Our mission is to serve humanity by advancing the arts and sciences of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration and their allied fields. Our more than 54,000 members include over 1,600 members in Pennsylvania. ASHRAE focuses on improving building systems, energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, refrigeration and sustainability through research, standards writing, publishing, certification and continuing education.

I'm here today to speak in support of House Bill 204. This bill establishes a comprehensive program for reducing the risk of Legionnaires disease by requiring increased monitoring, testing and disinfection for public water systems and notifications for customers when there is an elevated risk of exposure, along with strengthening the Department of Health's procedures in responding to a suspected outbreak. It also requires certain building owners and operators to create a water management plan tailored for their specific building and its use, for the purpose of minimizing the risk of legionella transmission to occupants.

Legionnaires' disease is a serious form of pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria. Every year, the CDC estimates there are between 8,000 and 18,000 cases of Legionnaire's Disease in the United States. More than 10% of those cases are fatal. This bacteria growth is commonly found in water systems where water is not adequately monitored or treated. Also, after periods of heavy rains and flooding, there is an increased risk of Legionnaires' disease due to potential contamination of water sources and disruptions to water systems.

While the disease has been known for decades, recent outbreaks have underscored the importance of consistent water management practices in water distribution systems and facilities of all sizes and types. This legislation will help to prevent

future outbreaks such as the summer 2025 outbreak in Harlem, New York City, in which over 100 people were infected and 7 people died.

Managing building water systems to minimize the risk of contamination from Legionella is an essential part of this legislation's comprehensive approach. One of ASHRAE's industry-leading standards is directly focused on preventing Legionnaires' disease in buildings. Standard 188-2018, *Legionellosis: Risk Management for Building Water Systems*, sets minimum requirements for legionella risk management. It includes instructions for conducting a building survey, creating a building water management program, and other preventive measures. Specific types of buildings are at higher risk for legionella bacteria, and Standard 188, along with its companion Guideline 12, addresses the factors that lead legionella to spread.

Again, ASHRAE supports the passage of House Bill 204 and its inclusion of our legionella prevention standard and guideline. This bill will help protect public health and reduce the risk of Legionnaires' Disease, which is an important part of ASHRAE's vision of creating a healthy and sustainable built environment for all.

Thank you.