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IN FAVOR OF HB146 WITH AMENDMENTS –

ENVIRONMENT – ON-SITE WASTEWATER SYSTEMS – REQUIREMENTS FOR INSPECTION AND PUMPING SERVICES AND IMPLEMENTATION DATES

To Environment and Transportation Committee Members,

My name is Rob Powell and I have been involved in the onsite wastewater industry for the past 45 years. I am currently self-employed in the on-site waste water industry as an environmental consultant and have been so for the last 11 years. I offer services to property owners for designing engineered, pressure-dosed sewage disposal system repairs that are necessary to replace failing septic systems. Prior to that time, I worked as a supervisor of Soil Testing with Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability for 37 years before retiring in November of 2014.

I AM OFFERING THIS STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR HB146, WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:

I support this bill as it will serve to further protect purchasers of properties served by onsite septic systems. During my tenure in the onsite industry for the past 48 years, I have seen too often the aftermath resulting from the purchase of a property served by a septic system that has failed within several months after the new owner moves it. On some properties, the required repairs are relatively simple with costs in the \$10,000 - \$15,000 range. However, there are numerous times where the repairs are more complicated and more costly; with installation costs ranging up to \$70,000 – a cost that few new homeowners can easily afford.

THE AMENDMENTS I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- **THE PROPERTY TRANSFER INSPECTION SHOULD INCLUDE A SEPTIC TANK CLEANING/PUMPOUT IN THE INSPECTION PROCESS AND BE COORDINATED BY THE PROPERTY TRANSFER INSPECTOR.** Failure to do so would seriously hamper an accurate and complete inspection of the entire system and may lead to missing key indicators of a failing system. It also opens up the possibility of a seller; knowing they have a septic system problem, having the septic tank pumped several days prior to the Property Transfer Inspection to deliberately mask key indicators of a system failure.

- **ADVANCED TREATMENT UNITS, AS DEFINED BY THE MARYLAND ONSITE WASTEATER PROFESSIONALS BOARD, ARE REQUIRED TO BE EVALUATED BY A LICENSED OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PROVIDER WITHIN THE LAST 6 MONTHS.** If advanced treatment units are maintained properly, their pump out scheduled is governed by the Licensed Operation and Maintenance Provider. Pumping these units too frequently may upset the biological process within the tanks. Also, if the contractor performing the pump out is not properly trained in maintenance/pump out procedures for the specific manufacture of the advanced treatment unit; performing the pump out could damage the unit.
- **ANY PROPERTY THAT HAS BEEN DESIGNATED TO BE RE-DEVELOPED OR OTHERWISE ABANDON THE CURRENT ONSITE WASTEWATER SYSTEM MAY BE EXEMPT FROM THE PUMP OUT AND PROPERTY TRANSFER INSPECTION.** If a property is purchased for the purpose of razing the structure and either re-designing and installing a new onsite system or connecting to public sewer; the costs of having a Property Transfer Inspection and Pump Out would be an unnecessary expense.

I ASK FOR A FAVORABLE REPORT ON HB146, EDUCATION, ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT – ON-SITE WASTEWATER SYSTEMS – REQUIREMENTS FOR INSPECTION AND PUMPING SERVICES AND IMPLEMENTATION DATES

Thank you for your time.

Robert Powell

James R. Powell