



SB 0719 – Sewage Sludge – Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances – Regulation

Hearing Date: Thursday, April 2, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE with amendments

Dear Chair Korman and members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed 17 organizations respectfully request a **FAVORABLE with amendments** report on SB 719, which establishes long-overdue limits on toxic PFAS in sewage sludge (biosolids) applied to Maryland farmland and takes important steps to identify and stop pollution at its source.

Sewage sludge used as fertilizer can contain dangerous levels of PFAS, or “forever chemicals,” which persist in the environment and pose serious risks to human health. These contaminants can run off into waterways, leach into groundwater, and accumulate in crops, livestock, and wildlife—impacting both farmers and surrounding communities. Despite longstanding knowledge of these risks, regulatory action has lagged.

SB 719 provides a practical, science-based framework by setting limits on PFAS concentrations in biosolids, requiring source tracking when levels are elevated, and strengthening authority to control industrial discharges. While there are no known safe levels of PFAS, this bill represents a meaningful step toward reducing exposure and preventing further contamination of our food systems and drinking water.

Waterkeepers Chesapeake and undersigned organizations support the Senate version of the bill, and strongly support notification to farmers (owners and operators) of PFAS concentrations in the sewage sludge (biosolids) they receive. However, **we request an amendment to this notification requirement so it is not tied to the bill’s 25 ppb threshold, but instead stands as an independent requirement** so that farmers are informed of **any detectable level of PFAS**. Farmers deserve clear, transparent information to make informed decisions about what is applied to their land. Virginia is currently advancing legislation that includes farmer notification provisions. We believe the intention was to mirror the notification requirement in the Virginia bill but as written it does not. The goal of this effort is clear: to protect the public health of our food, soils, and waterways.

We urge a favorable report on SB 719 and ask the House to adopt the Senate version with this essential farmer notifications amendment.

Respectfully,
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