



TESTIMONY FOR SB 0719/HB0925

Sewage Sludge - Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances - Regulation

House Environment and Transportation Committee

FAVORABLE

TO: Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair; and the Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Patrick Crump, member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

DATE: March 31, 2026

The Episcopal Church along with many other faith communities endorses responsible stewardship of God's creation, based on God's command to humans to be stewards of the environment. And the prophet Jeremiah warns, "I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable." Our faith teaches us that all creation is interconnected, and the health of our environment directly impacts the well-being of our communities.

During treatment, PFAS (or "forever chemicals") concentrate in sewage sludge, which are then spread on agricultural fields. Alarmingly, Maryland's sewage sludge permits allow waste from multiple facilities to be applied to single fields, heightening the risk of contamination. Sewage sludge containing PFAS then runs off farm fields and filters into groundwater, contaminating drinking water sources. PFAS also bioaccumulates in fish and wildlife, and is retained in milk, fruits and vegetables.

Building on previous bills targeting industrial sources of PFAS, the Sewage Sludge Regulation bill would limit PFAS in sewage sludge applied to farmland. Maryland must take stronger action to safeguard its drinking water sources, environment, and the health of our farmers and communities. While there is no known safe level, this bill takes a significant step to lower health risks, and identify and mitigate sources of PFAS before getting to wastewater treatment plants. Farmers have a right to know what they are putting on their fields.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network requests a FAVORABLE report.