



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Matthew W. Garbark, Director, Department of Public Works
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	May 12, 2026
SUBJECT	26-0170 Supplementary State Fund Operating Appropriation – Department of Public Works – \$2,177,758

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

FOR the purpose of providing a Supplementary State Fund Operating Appropriation in the amount of \$2,177,758 to the Department of Public Works – Service 673 (Wastewater Management), to provide funding for enhanced nutrient removal operations and maintenance activities at the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant; and providing for a special effective date.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

This legislation authorizes a supplemental appropriation funded entirely through a grant from the Maryland Department of the Environment. These funds were not included in the FY26 budget because DPW was not aware of the award at the time the budget was developed. So, to be clear, this is not related to a budget shortfall or overspending by the Department. This is new external funding, and the legislation simply gives DPW the authority to receive and spend those funds.

The funding itself is essentially a performance-based award from the State. MDE provides these grants to wastewater treatment plants that remove nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus at levels significantly better than what is required under their permits.

In 2024, the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant achieved the lowest nutrient levels in the plant's history, far exceeding both permit requirements and advanced performance benchmarks. Because of that exceptional performance, the State awarded DPW approximately \$2.17 million to help offset the costs associated with maintaining that level of treatment.

In short, this supplemental reflects strong operational performance and environmental success. It is not a budget issue.

These funds help offset the increased operational costs associated with achieving these very stringent treatment goals, including additional chemical usage, higher utility costs, and equipment maintenance. For example, it takes more methanol, ferric chloride, electricity, and ongoing maintenance to consistently meet these tighter nutrient removal standards.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report.

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