



**A Note from WSSC Water's Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO):**

[Rachel Jones](#) was appointed by Governor Hogan and later sworn in by Speaker Adrienne Jones to the House of Delegates. Her appointment fills the vacancy created when now-Senator Michael Jackson was sworn in to serve as the senator for this district prior to the beginning of the Legislative Session. Delegate Jones will represent District 27B, which covers portions of Prince George's and Calvert counties.

The Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Transportation Authority have chosen [Accelerated Maryland Partners LLC](#) as the firm who will lead the public-private partnership to replace the American Legion Bridge and add four "high-occupancy toll" lanes to portions of Interstates 495 and 270. WSSC Water will continue working with MDOT and MDTA along with the newly chosen developer to protect the Commission and customers from any financial impacts created as a result of this project.

The House Environment and Transportation Committee will hold a bill hearing for [HB 501 \(MC/PG 102-21\)](#) – **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees** on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:30 p.m. This WSSC Water-sponsored legislation authorizes the WSSC Board of Ethics to impose a fee on individuals who file late or fail to file required financial disclosure statements.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** will continue to advocate for legislation that supports WSSC Water's mission to provide safe and reliable water, life's most precious resource, and return clean water to our environment, all in an ethical, sustainable, and financially responsible manner. IRO looks at all legislation that impacts WSSC Water's administrative, operational and financial capability.

*The Annapolis Observer* is **IRO's** weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and highlights the progress of key bills of interest to WSSC Water, as well as other information.

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## Legislative Updates

Find the status of and position on WSSC Water-related bills in our [Legislative Update](#).

[HB 501 \(MC/PG 102-21\)](#) – **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees: SUPPORT.** The Montgomery County House Delegation and Prince George's County House Delegation unanimously passed this bill. This WSSC Water-sponsored bill will authorize the WSSC Water Board of Ethics to impose a fee to individuals who file late or fail to file a financial disclosure statement. The House Environment and Transportation Committee's bill hearing is scheduled on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:30 p.m.

[HB 561](#) – **Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Wastewater, Thermal, and Other Renewable Sources: SUPPORT.** HB 561 expands Tier 1 renewable energy sources in the State's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard to include: methane from the anaerobic decomposition or organic materials in a landfill or wastewater treatment plant used to generate electricity, thermal energy, or mechanical energy; and raw or treated wastewater used as a heat source or sink for a heating or cooling system. The bill also allows producers of energy generated from wastewater heating or cooling systems to receive renewable energy credits.

This legislation will indirectly benefit WSSC Water because we are DC Water's largest customer: on average, they process 118 million gallon per day of our system's wastewater at their Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant ("Blue Plains"). This represents nearly two-thirds of all wastewater in our system and 42% of all the wastewater treated at Blue Plains. Under the bill, RECs generated at Blue Plains and other facilities can be sold to electric companies and energy suppliers in Maryland to mitigate their use of non-renewable energy sources. DC Water's RECs sales could result in additional revenue that may offset operating costs at Blue Plains and could potentially mitigate increases in or even reduce fees charged to WSSC Water.

**[HB 789 \(MC/PG 100-21\)](#) – *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Video Streaming and Archiving Meetings and Late Payment Charges: SUPPORT w/ Amendment*. Staff thanks the bill sponsor for the opportunity to work with them to address our concerns. The bill has unanimously passed the Montgomery County House and Senate Delegations, and the Prince George's County House Delegation. The House Environment and Transportation Committee will hold a bill hearing for HB 789 on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:30 p.m.**

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## Around WSSC Water

### **WSSC Water Efforts to Maintain a Safe and Secure Water System**

In light of the recent water hack at a Florida utility, we want to assure our customers that WSSC Water is taking this situation very seriously. We remain on heightened alert and understand the criticality of protecting a water supply for 1.8 million people.

Our water network and filtration plant operating systems are very well protected with multiple layers of security. They aren't connected to the internet like the systems hacked at the Florida utility. WSSC Water is on high alert today and every day. Because of the situation in Florida, we are paying increased attention to our physical and cybersecurity efforts.

We have multiple layers of security, both physical and cyber, to protect the 1.8 million customers we serve in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. WSSC Water has a police and homeland security division. Our police officers actively patrol WSSC Water's 1,000-square-mile service area as well as remotely monitor all of our facilities.

Our water filtration plants are staffed 24/7/365, equipped with CCTV cameras and regularly patrolled by our WSSC Water Police Force. WSSC Water maintains a partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and constantly tests our security protocols and adheres to best practices. WSSC Water recently completed our Risk and Resilience assessment required by the U.S. EPA to ensure we are following strict security standards.

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### **Reminder to be Saltwise In Winter**

Did you know using salt on walkways, driveways and roads is harmful to our environment? That includes sources of drinking water and the pipes and pumps needed to supply water to our customers.

Once the ice and snow melt, the salt doesn't go away. It seeps into the ground and wells, and travels with stormwater into streams, wells and drinking water reservoirs. It also corrodes pipes. Please remember to be saltwise! A 12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Visit <http://wsscwater.com/saltwise> for more info.

### **WSSC Water Proud Participant in National Engineers' Week (Eweek)**

We're excited for *Introduce A Girl to Engineering Day* next week! The free virtual event is open to girls in 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade. You may sign up on our Eweek 2021 page [here](#).

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# Calendar

- February 22: Bill Hearing – [HB 501 \(MC/PG 102-21\)](#) – **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees** – House Environment & Transportation Committee – 1:30 p.m..
- March 3: Bill Hearing – [HB 789 \(MC/PG 100-21\)](#) – **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Video Streaming and Archiving Meetings and Late Payment Charges** – House Environment & Transportation Committee – 1:30 p.m.
- March 22 : Crossover. Opposite Chamber bills received after this date are subject to referral to Rules Committees.
- April 5 : Sine Die

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## Related Links

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

- [Session Calendar \(PDF\)](#)
- [Track Legislation](#)

[Montgomery County Delegation](#)

[Prince George's County Delegation](#)

[Maryland Association of Counties](#)

[Maryland Municipal League](#)

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## Customer Advocates

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Find your Customer Advocate here: [www.wsscwater.com/advocate](http://www.wsscwater.com/advocate)

## About IRO

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** team works to promote the *value of water* and the *value of WSSC Water*, engage *federal, state, county and local government* and elected stakeholders and advocate for WSSC Water's strategic interests and priorities; and foster *relationships* with organizations and promote collaborative interests.

In Annapolis, the **IRO** team works with members to support administratively and fiscally responsible legislation, in addition to championing policy that benefits all water utilities throughout Maryland. WSSC Water is committed to increased statewide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and sound regulatory initiatives.

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## Meet the IRO Team

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Please click [here](#) for a printable sheet of our key contacts.



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For over 100 years, WSSC Water has proudly served the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties – providing drinking water that has always met strict Safe Drinking Water Act standards and protecting the environment through vital water resource recovery services. Our vision is to be THE world-class water utility, where excellent products and services are always on tap. [www.wsscwater.com](http://www.wsscwater.com)