

TESTIMONY FOR HB0216
Environment - Salt Applicator Certification Program - Establishment

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Qi
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus
Person Submitting: Jared Schablein, Chair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0216 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Studies have shown us that road salt is very detrimental to our health and well-being. Road salt when used can enter water supplies by percolating down through the ground or by running off from roads and parking lots into water reservoirs and shallow wells. Once it has happened, road salt is very hard to get out of drinking water.

Other than road salt filtering into our water supply, there is environmental damage that comes along with it, as well as damage to roads and vehicles. Currently, Public contractors have to have training on how much salt to apply to roads so that they don't treat the roads with too much salt.

However, there is not enough oversight of private contractors. This bill will require the Department of the Environment to establish a Salt Applicator Certification Program to encourage efficient winter maintenance of roadways, parking lots, and sidewalks through the use of salt or salt alternatives. Each commercial applicator would have to participate in the program and maintain a valid certificate.

Using salt alternatives, and not spreading too much salt are important ways to ensure that we do not have an abundance of road salt accumulating on our roads and filtering into our water supply.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.