



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 209/SB 313
Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act * February 2020

I write today on behalf of Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, Inc. in support of the Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act, introduced by Del. Lierman and Sen. Augustine. This bill would ban plastic bags from distribution by stores at the point of sale and require stores to charge at least 10 cents for each paper bag or reusable carryout bag for sale.

This legislation is important for many reasons:

- It will clean up our communities and neighborhoods
- It will clean up our waterways and the Bay
- It will ensure that consumers only pay for what they need – if they do not need a paper bag, they will not need to buy one
- It will hold retailers harmless so that they continue to operate and expand food access to all neighborhoods, including under-resourced neighborhoods
- It will save residents, local governments, and businesses money spent on clean up and trash disposal

Waterfront Partnership administers the Waterfront Management Authority, which is funded by a surcharge on all commercial properties along the Waterfront neighborhoods of the Inner Harbor, Harbor East, Harbor Point and Fells Point.

Area property owners sought to create the Authority, relying on their own funds in addition to all the property taxes they pay, **in order to create a cleaner Waterfront.**

Although City government is charged with litter and trash removal, property owners found the need to set a higher standard of cleanliness since dirty and litter - filled public spaces detracted from any positive business activity and kept potential area residents, office workers and shoppers away. **The Waterfront Management Authority spends over \$1 million annually to remove litter from the Waterfront neighborhoods it represents;** we would much prefer to use those funds to beautify the area by planting flowers than picking up litter including plastic bags and other waste.

Thank you for considering this legislation. We urge a favorable report.

Laurie Schwartz, President
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.