



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Christiana Rigby
Councilmember

District 3

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 209/SB 313

Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act
February 11, 2020

Dear Chairperson Barve, Vice-Chairperson Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

As the County Councilmember representing District 3 on the Howard County Council, I am writing today in support of HB 209/SB 313, the Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act, introduced by Delegate Lierman and Senator 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.

According to the National Resources Defense Council, the average family in the United States uses roughly 1,500 plastic bags every year, yet very few of these bags end up being successfully recycled. This amounts to as many as 100 million plastic bags used annually in Howard County alone, many of which end up in our streams, forests, and wildlife.

Last year, I successfully sponsored legislation with Councilman Opel Jones that will implement a fee on disposable plastic bags in Howard County. This local legislation was the first step of a broader local effort to curb plastic pollution in our community, but more can and should be done. As you consider opportunities to address the rampant overuse of single-use plastics in the state of Maryland, the Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act will move our state toward a cleaner, more sustainable future.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Christiana Rigby
Howard County Council, District 3