

TESTIMONY FOR HB0391

Solid Waste Management – Prohibition on Releasing a Balloon Into the Atmosphere

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Hartman

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Jared Schablein, Chair of the LSPC

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0391 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. It is a top priority of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus and our members to protect the environment and support legislation that would protect our pristine environment for generations to come. HB0391 is a bi-partisan common-sense bill that would better protect the environment from unnecessary pollution and trash.

Balloons, on average, takes six months to 4 years to fully decompose. Once released into the atmosphere, they can wreak havoc on the environment for long periods. Once the balloon falls back into the environment, its waste poses a risk for wildlife in two significant ways. The first way is being ingested by wild animals attracted to the color, ribbons, and tassels. Eating the balloon is often a death sentence for the animal. The second way it poses a risk to wildlife is the balloon waste forming the perfect trap for animals to become entangled. Once entangled, the animal is often trapped until it dies or continues to live with extreme discomfort and limited mobility.

It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.