

January 25, 2022

2022 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
HB0150: Public Schools - Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste

BILL: HB0150: Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
POSITION: Testimony of Support of House Bill 0150
BILL ANALYSIS: Establishing the Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste to award grants to county boards of education and public schools to develop and implement programs for reducing food waste and to establish composting of pre-and post-consumer waste; and requiring the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education to review grant applications and select recipients to be awarded grants by the State Department of Education.

My name is Heather Bruskin, and I have the privilege to serve as the Co-Chair of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council. I submit written testimony today on behalf of the members of the Council itself – not the government or the Governor’s office- in SUPPORT of HB150 Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste.

The Food System Resiliency Council was established by the Maryland General Assembly in the 2021 legislative session to bring together 33 appointed council members from across the state, all with different points of entry and expertise to work toward a more resilient food system and address the food insecurity crisis due to COVID-19.

One of the key mandates of this council was to develop, by Nov. 1st 2021, equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of the Maryland food system.

The report represents five months of intensive work and thought leadership on behalf of organizations such as both the state’s two main food banks, all the state’s food councils, leaders in anti-hunger advocacy, emergency food assistance providers, state administrators, emergency responders, food system experts and universities.

The recommendations in the report align with the goals of this legislation and underscore the importance of reducing food waste and expanding food scraps composting in order to build the long term resilience and sustainability of our local food system.

As Co-Chair of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council, and behalf of the membership of the Council, we enthusiastically encourage a favorable report for this legislation and the opportunity it provides to build a more just, equitable, and resilient food system.

Thank you.