

Testimony Supporting SB0124
House Ways and Means Committee
March 28, 2022

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Pranavi Kamana and I'm currently a sophomore at Seneca Valley High School which is in Montgomery County and I'm here to share my support/advocate for Bill SB 124.

To me SB124 isn't just a bill that provides a grant program to support school based initiatives to prevent, reduce, and compost food waste but it's a completely new perspective on how we think about food waste.

Speaking from personal experience, every day after lunchtime I would see tons of food on the ground or on the stairways that was perfectly fine and could've been eaten. Knowing that MCPS doesn't have a compost program in place to address this issue, I knew that the not eaten food would essentially be thrown away. I definitely find this to be very wasteful and essentially counterintuitive. And coming from a household that truly values the importance of food and not wasting it, this bill would essentially give MoCo and Maryland as a whole an opportunity to learn more about the issue while also understanding why exactly we should all be in support of it.

The fact that so many students from my school qualify for receiving free & reduced-price meals means that there is definitely a correlation to why exactly we shouldn't be throwing away this food. As a part of this written testimony, I would like to include a message that one of the students discussed in a postcard campaign done at my school relating to this issue. Derek Gomez, a sophomore at Seneca Valley, states, "Having completed some of my SSL hours at my local food pantry for low income families, I've seen the amounts of families that come to ask for food. Knowing this I feel like it's very wasteful and wrong to waste this food, when others are less fortunate, and if they can't receive it we should at least separate the leftovers to be composted."

For all of these reasons and many more, please support SB 124 and support a transition toward composting in Maryland. Thank you.

Pranavi Kamana