



Senate Bill 222

Environment – Reducing Packaging Materials - Producer Responsibility

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

Date: February 9, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 222. This bill would reasonably require packaging producers to take more responsibility for the role they play in adding to the waste stream by providing new resources to struggling recycling networks.

Currently, all costs associated with recycling and waste management are left to local governments, and in effect, taxpayers. Due largely to declining markets for recycled commodities, county recycling networks have experienced significant hardships and have been forced to draw taxpayer subsidies to continue their operations.

SB 222 outlines a framework for an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model that would place responsibility on packaging producers for end-of-life management. Industry members would form one or more producer responsibility organizations that would collect payments from producers based on the recyclability of product packaging. Local governments would be eligible to apply for and receive reimbursements for the work they are already doing, including labor costs, collecting, transporting, and processing covered materials. Counties would then be able to invest any new funds back into their networks to help ease the burden on taxpayers. SB 222 would also encourage producers to make packaging that is more easily recyclable and more environmentally friendly.

SB 222 would provide needed financial support to struggling local government recycling networks by holding producers responsible for their products. Accordingly, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 222.