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SB0686

February 20, 2024

TO: Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 686 – Environment – Covered Electronic Devices Recycling Program – Establishment

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 686.

SB 686 would establish the Covered Electronic Device Recycling Program in the Department of the Environment. We understand the importance and necessity of a recycling program to handle the large electronics supply. In 2022 alone, Baltimore City had over 525,000 pounds of electronics recycled.

Despite the state offering grants for jurisdictions to properly recycle electronics, it is currently insufficient and not a viable long-term solution. In 2016, the state issued \$250,000 in grants for electronic waste, with up to \$15,000 available for an individual jurisdiction. However, in 2017 the cost for electronics recycling was nearly \$800,000 for just four of the state's counties. A \$15,000 grant would not cover even one month of service for certain jurisdictions.

This legislation would ease the financial burden of localities by implementing modest fees on newly purchased electronics. The legislation would establish two fees for covered electronic devices. Tier 1 covered electronic devices would have a \$10.00 fee for a computer monitor, television, or video display device. Tier 2 covered electronic devices would have a \$5.00 fee for a laptop computer, personal digital assistant, notebook, reader, tablet device, cell phone, a central processing unit of a computer, printer, scanner, copier, and any other computer or electronic device or accessory that has a plug or battery that MDE designates. The fees collected from the newly purchased electronics would fully fund recycling centers and operations throughout the state.

This program would allow localities to divert more resources to other much-needed programs in their respective jurisdictions. In just under a decade, six jurisdictions with electronics recycling programs in place have spent over \$8,000,000 for the recycling of those electronics.

With more and more electronics entering the market it is paramount that there is a coherent, sustainable financial plan to handle the waste that comes from them. SB 686 provides that framework and sustainability.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 686.