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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 26, 2024

Good afternoon Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

For the record, I am Delegate Regina T. Boyce presenting **HB1318 - Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs - Established.**

HB1318 establishes the **Wasted Food Reduction & Diversion Grant Program** (administered by the Department of Agriculture) and **On-Farm Organics Diversion & Recycling Grant Program** (administered by the Department of the Environment) for **reducing, rescuing, composting, and recycling wasted food**, along with **on-farm organics recycling and compost use**.

In addition funds from these grants support the School Waste Reduction and Composting Program with a portion of the funds.

Maryland requires expanded access to and capacity for food waste reduction and diversion from disposal, benefiting local communities. A lack of funding is a significant obstacle to developing and expanding food waste reduction infrastructure and programs. Recommendations from the Maryland Food Systems Resiliency Council highlight the need for investments in food waste reduction infrastructure and education.

Programs Supported by the Surcharge:

Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program (48%): Supports projects, infrastructure, and education to reduce food waste and transition away from single-use food serviceware.

On-Farm Organics Diversion and Recycling Grant Program(48%): Assists farmers in food preservation, organics recycling, and compost use.

School Waste Reduction and Composting Program (4%): Supports county boards and public schools in reducing food waste and composting food scraps.

Various entities including local governments, educational agencies, non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and farmers are eligible for funding. Priority will be given to projects benefiting local communities, serving overburdened or underserved communities, and following best management practices.

I thank the Committee for their time and consideration for support of HB1318.

Sincerely,

Regina T. Boyce

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