

**To: The Honorable Brian Feldman
Education, Energy and Environment Committee**

From: Bioenergy Devco

**Subject: HB 1318, Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food
Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs –
Establishment**

Date: March 26, 2024

Position: Favorable

Bioenergy Devco supports House Bill 1318, Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs – Establishment.

This testimony is offered on behalf of Bioenergy Development Company (BDC), an international leader in anaerobic digestion solutions with over 24 years of experience. BDC's exceptional team of engineers, microbial experts, biologists, chemists, agronomists, construction designers and facility managers are dedicated to delivering an environmentally sound solution that creates a true source of renewable, carbon-negative energy as well as a high nutrient soil amendment.

BDC's anaerobic digester in Jessup recycles approximately 130 tons of organic waste annually. By diverting this material from the waste stream, we are helping to address the environmental, social, and economic issues that result from existing waste industry practices.

House Bill 1318 establishes the On-Farm Organics Diversion and Recycling Grant Program in the Department of Agriculture to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement on-farm organics recycling and compost use, wasted food prevention, and food rescue. This bill also creates the Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund and requires interest earnings of the Fund to be credited to the Fund. Under the bill, the Department of the Environment will award grants to eligible entities for infrastructure, programs, and education that reduce, rescue, and divert wasted food in the State.

This is not a new concept. In 2008, the Maryland General Assembly passed The Empower Maryland Act. This legislation imposed a similar fee on utilities in Maryland. Just like this bill, those fees were used to develop the necessary infrastructure to accommodate renewable energy and energy efficiency technology. As we look to our



future it is critical that we act swiftly in developing the organics recycling infrastructure that will be needed to accomplish our climate mitigation goals.

Bioenergy Devco respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1318.

Please contact Aaron J. Greenfield at 410.446.1992, if you have any questions.