



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## **Senate Bill 56**

Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge

Date: February 6, 2024

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Matt Stegman  
MD Staff Attorney

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 56 which establishes the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program to reduce food waste and increase organic recycling through the state. The program is funded through a nominal surcharge on solid waste disposal.

### **Food waste affects climate change**

The diversion of food waste from incinerators and landfills through composting helps minimize the amount of carbon dioxide and methane released into the atmosphere by these traditional methods of waste management. Lower greenhouse gas emissions improve air quality, reduce impacts to human health, and increase resilience to the effects of climate change.

### **Soil health is key to the future of agriculture**

Well-managed composting of waste adds biologically rich material to soils, feeding essential micro-organisms and fungi that improve soil health and enhance production of healthy, nutritious food. Healthier soils increase water holding capacity, facilitate nutrient cycling, and reduce soil loss, helping farmers maintain their land and minimizing risks to water quality and the Chesapeake Bay.

This legislation will improve soil health, help fight the effects of climate change, and transition Maryland to a more effective, equitable, and environmentally sound waste management system.

### **CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 196**

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.