

## Written Testimony in Support of HB1318 – Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs – Established

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March 26, 2024

To: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

I am offering this testimony to urge the committee to support HB1318, and give it a favorable report.

This legislation would establish a fund and grant programs to support food waste reduction and diversion efforts in Maryland. This legislation is needed to support a variety of food waste recovery, organics recycling, and composting policies already in place, but which lack sufficient funding to make significant progress in implementation.

**As a community volunteer active in food waste reduction efforts, I can testify first-hand to the great difficulty in finding funding and resources to establish organics recycling and composting programs in our communities. While I am disappointed that that the funding mechanism in the original legislation has been removed, this bill will be a step forward in overcoming this obstacle.**

Expansion of composting and organics recycling infrastructure and the availability of high-quality compost is crucial to supporting Maryland farmers in building and maintaining healthy soils. This, in turn, will lead to improved water and nutrient cycling, healthier food, and cleaner watersheds.

By keeping food waste out of landfills and incinerators, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this legislation also will help Maryland reach its emissions reduction goals.

Please support HB1318 and give this legislation a favorable report. Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

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