

# **Testimony SB0056 Food Waste Final 2.pdf**

Uploaded by: Barbara Matheson

Position: FAV



## SB 0056

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

### Testimony before Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 6, 2024

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Sponsor Hester, and members of the committee, our names are Elizabeth Fixen and Barbara Matheson. We represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of SB 0056.**

Maryland has 40 municipal waste landfills that produce methane and carbon dioxide. According to analysis by The Environmental Integrity Project (in consultation with the Maryland Department of the Environment) these 40 landfills release as much ghg pollution as about 975,000 passenger vehicles driving for one year or about four times the ghg emissions as the average Maryland coal-fired power plant.\* This makes landfills the largest source of methane in the state, not the natural gas industry. In keeping with these facts, the Maryland Department of the Environment has ruled to cut methane emissions in landfills by 50%. The best way to reduce emissions from landfills is to reduce the amount of waste. Food is the most prevalent type of waste in Maryland landfills.

SB 0056 establishes the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to award grants for infrastructure, programming and education focused on reducing, rescuing, and diverting food waste in the state. It provides assistance with the costs of developing and implementing composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects. The bill establishes a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge to be collected at disposal systems. The bill offers definitive solutions to the landfill ghg emissions problem.

The Maryland General Assembly's ambitious goal of 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions cannot be achieved without reducing food waste.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Barbara Matheson and Elizabeth Fixen  
Columbia, Maryland

\*<https://www.environmentalintegrity.org/news/report-finds-mds-landfills-release4-x>

# **Testimony SB0056\_ Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduc**

Uploaded by: Bridget O'Toole

Position: FAV

**KATIE FRY HESTER**  
*Legislative District 9*  
Howard and Montgomery Counties

Education, Energy, and  
Environment Committee

Chair, Joint Committee on  
Cybersecurity, Information Technology  
and Biotechnology



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**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**Testimony in Support of SB56: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction**

February 5, 2024

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Thank you for considering Senate Bill 56, which will provide resources to support the reduction, reuse, and recycling of our most critical waste streams to align with our recycling and carbon reduction goals.

Despite significant progress in passing composting legislation, Maryland has work to do to reach the national goal of a 50% recycling rate by 2030. In 2019, Maryland generated 1.86 million tons of compostable materials and 927,926 tons of food waste, with only 15.5% recycled.<sup>1</sup> As food waste accounts for significant methane from landfills, which is 28 times more detrimental than carbon dioxide, its reduction is important to achieve our climate goals.

This legislation creates the Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund to support various programs and initiatives focused on reducing food and solid waste, promoting composting and compost use, and developing methods for upcycling and remanufacturing materials. The fund can be capitalized with federal or private funds, philanthropic funds, the state operating budget, or through a solid waste disposal surcharge or tipping fee, which this legislation enables. Furthermore, the fund will enable Maryland to leverage funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act provided to states working to reduce food waste and loss.<sup>2</sup>

The Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund is then used for four key programs:

- The On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program provides grants for on-farm composting, compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Pages/FoodScraps.aspx#Introduction>

<sup>2</sup>

[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-12/draft\\_national\\_strategy\\_for\\_reducing\\_food\\_loss\\_and\\_waste\\_and\\_recycling-organics.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-12/draft_national_strategy_for_reducing_food_loss_and_waste_and_recycling-organics.pdf)

- The Grant Program to Reduce and Compost Food Waste develops and implements programs to measure and reduce food waste in public schools.
- The Food Waste Reduction and Diversion Grants Program develops infrastructure programs that reduce, reuse, and compost food waste.
- The Circular Economy Incentive Program stimulates upcycling and remanufacturing materials in the state that would otherwise be disposed of.

Senate Bill 56 represents a significant opportunity for Maryland to improve its waste management practices. This bill will close the gaps in our current waste diversion efforts by establishing local solid waste disposal surcharge programs and encouraging the reduction, reuse, and recycling of critical waste streams. Supporting this bill ensures Maryland's progress toward climate and recycling goals while preventing food waste during times of food insecurity for Marylanders.

**For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB56.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katie Fry Hester".

Senator Katie Fry Hester  
Howard and Montgomery Counties

# **SB0056\_Food\_Waste\_And\_Solid\_Waste\_Reduction\_MLC\_FA**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0056  
FOOD WASTE AND SOLID WASTE REDUCTION – GRANTS, FUND, AND  
SURCHARGE**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Hester

**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0056 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Food waste is a growing problem in our state. It comprises a quarter of the trash that we throw in landfills and creates additional greenhouse gases as it breaks down. Additionally, given the number of Marylanders going hungry, it seems that keeping as much food waste out of landfills as possible is an important goal.

This bill, if enacted, would divert as much food as possible from landfills, by supporting on-farm composting, invest in cold storage facilities that would ensure that more unused food gets distributed to food banks, and establishes a program that would encourage more upcycling and remanufacture of materials that would otherwise end up in landfills.

This program would be funded by a solid waste surcharge and the use of other state and federal funds.

Our members appreciate the effort to get in front of this growing problem with real solutions. Trash, and especially food waste are problems that we can't kick down the road.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.

**Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB56.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jenny Kraska

Position: FAV





**MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE**

**February 6, 2024**

**SB 56**

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

**Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers testimony in support of Senate Bill 56. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state’s second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

SB 56 seeks to establish the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program. This program, aimed at supporting on-farm composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects, reflects a responsible and sustainable approach to environmental stewardship. Pope Francis, in his encyclical “Laudato Si,” emphasizes the moral imperative for humanity to care for our common home, and initiatives such as this grant program are crucial steps towards fulfilling that responsibility.

The Catholic Church has a long-standing commitment to promoting the dignity of every person and caring for the vulnerable. Food waste is not just an environmental concern but also a social justice issue, as it denies many individuals access to basic necessities. By establishing the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program, we take a significant stride toward reducing food waste and ensuring that the abundance of resources with which we are blessed is used wisely and justly.

The MCC appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 56.

# **SB0056 - Solid Waste Surcharge + School Compost Gr**

Uploaded by: Joseph Jakuta

Position: FAV

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Testimony on: SB 56 - "Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge"**

**Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's**

**Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 6, 2024**



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony to SB56, which would allow county governments to add a surcharge on solid waste to fund certain programs. Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change-causing pollution in our schools, and our group is active in Prince George's County. In particular, we recently worked directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a first in the national School Climate Change Action Plan.

Maryland has nearly 900,000 students enrolled in school and this means that our schools produce a large number of meals to feed these students on any given day and even in a perfect situation there will be high amounts of food waste.<sup>1</sup> In Prince George's County, at least 64% of its students participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Meal (FARM) program, and given some strict federal requirements around fruits and vegetables being served to all students in the FARM program the amount of uneaten food can increase.<sup>2</sup> Under the current paradigm, this food waste will end up in a landfill, which is a problem. Improvements have occurred in recent years, with composting programs expanding to 17 schools in Prince George's County at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, but that accounts for only 8% of the school programs, and funding is lacking to make this program more widespread.

A problem now is providing the funding to get wide-scale composting programs at schools in Maryland. It is clear that a good number of the schools will need to comply with HB 264, in particular in Prince George's County given both the amount of food waste produced serving students and the existence of the Prince George's County Organics Composting Facility that all of Prince George's schools are within thirty miles of. To begin to solve the "Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste" was to provide school systems with the resources needed to comply with HB 264. However, funding for these grants is minimal, last year only \$195,000 was made available for these grants. Assuming a maximum award allocation, this would only provide funding for 24 schools per year and it would take almost 60 years to provide grant funds to every Maryland school. SB 56 will allow for funds from this surcharge to be used to fund these grants and provide more funds for this vital program.

Prince George's County is also ripe for this type of surcharge to be implemented. In January of 2024, the County implemented the Better Bag Bill, which includes a 10-cent fee on single-use paper bags. Prince George's County also has a Climate Action Plan that specifically calls for "introducing a Pay-as You-Throw (PAYT) fee structure, which would incentivize residents to recycle and repurpose waste to reduce the disposal fees."<sup>3</sup> This type of program will align well with Prince George's climate action goals.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.

<sup>1</sup> [https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Documents/school\\_enrollment/school\\_2021/Table1.pdf](https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Documents/school_enrollment/school_2021/Table1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pgcps.org/globalassets/offices/accountability/docs---accountability/sprm/2021-2026-equity-strategic-plan.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://e.issuu.com/embed.html?d=draft\\_climate\\_action\\_plan\\_01-15-2022&showOtherPublicationsAsSuggestions=true&u=environment.mypgc.us](https://e.issuu.com/embed.html?d=draft_climate_action_plan_01-15-2022&showOtherPublicationsAsSuggestions=true&u=environment.mypgc.us)

**SB\_56\_ZeroWasteMoCo\_FAV\_Feb6\_2024-1.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kelly Doordan

Position: FAV



**Testimony On:** SB 56 Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge  
**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**Organization:** Zero Waste Montgomery County  
**Submitting:** Kelly Doordan  
**Position:** Support  
**Date:** February 6, 2024

Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record. Zero Waste Montgomery County strongly SUPPORTS S.B. 56 - Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge.

Maryland has enacted laudable policies to reduce food waste and increase food recovery and recycling. A barrier to expanding these programs further has been a lack of dedicated funding for infrastructure to expand some of these programs. We know that reducing food waste benefits the climate by helping to avoid emissions from generation to disposal. This legislation helps us achieve climate benefits as well as significant social and economic co-benefits by reducing food waste through expanded infrastructure for edible food recovery and food security, as well as expanded opportunities for farmers to benefit from on-farm composting and compost use.

This model for funding waste reduction projects has successfully been used in numerous states and local jurisdictions across the United States. A \$2 per ton surcharge on waste disposed of at incinerators and landfills can help fill the identified need for investments in programs like cold storage for edible food recovery, on-farm composting, and school grants for food waste reduction and composting, the latter of which was authorized in 2022 but requires an annual appropriation.

Expanding on-farm composting and the availability of high-quality compost supports agriculture and regenerative food systems in Maryland by building healthier soils. Grants from this program will provide community benefits and a funding mechanism to help Maryland meet existing and new goals for climate and zero waste while supporting food security, local farmers and agriculture, and remanufacturing materials as part of a

circular economy where materials can be maintained for as long as possible at their highest and best use rather than incinerated or landfilled.

Please approve SB 56 to provide a mechanism to support zero waste, edible food recovery, Maryland farmers, and climate progress.

# **SB0056-Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction-Educat**

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



**Committee:** Education, Energy and Environment  
**Testimony on:** SB0056 - Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction - Grants, Fund, and Surcharge  
**Organization:** Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing  
**Submitting:** Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** February 6, 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB0056. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of nearly 30 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on SB0056.

According to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), 26% of the waste entering landfills is organic and only 18% of food waste generated is recycled. Organic waste drives the carbon footprint of landfills. Reducing food waste and increasing diversion improves business efficiency, reduces environmental impact, and can decrease food insecurity.

MD House Bill 264, Organics Recycling and Waste Diversion–Food Residuals that became effective in January 2023, required certain generators within 30 miles of a composting facility to either reduce, divert to food rescue organizations, farms for animal feed operations, or compost or anaerobically digest the residuals. However, at this point, there are only six composting facilities active in the state, which limits the effectiveness of the law. For example, in 2020, Maryland set a goal of diverting 60% of food scraps by 2035. Our current food residuals recycling rate is 22.6% according to the 2022 Maryland Department of the Environment’s Maryland Solid Waste Management and Diversion Report.

This bill supports the expansion of Maryland’s food residuals recycling in order to meet our required climate and environmental goals, creates mechanisms to discourage gratuitous use of landfills, and establishes a new program to encourage greater upcycling and remanufacturing of materials that would otherwise be disposed of.

These programs would include a Food Waste Reduction and Diversion Grant Program and a Circular Economy Incentive Program, as well as an On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant in order to support on-farm composting, educate the public about composting, preserve and rescue food for consumption by individuals, and create more cold storage across the state.



These new programs would be funded by a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge. The initial surcharge would be \$2 per ton of solid waste to fund the Reduce, Recycle, and Remanufacture Fund. Local jurisdictions would be enabled to substitute their own surcharge instead, enabling more local control of the projects.

SB0056 will help Maryland reduce food waste, increase food recovery, and foster greater composting in the state, which will enhance our ability to meet our food waste diversion goals by 2035. The MLC Climate Justice Wing strongly supports SB0056 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.

350MoCo

Adat Shalom Climate Action

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Chesapeake Earth Holders

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Climate Parents of Prince George's

Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition

Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County

Echotopia

Elders Climate Action

Fix Maryland Rail

Glen Echo Heights Mobilization

Greenbelt Climate Action Network

HoCoClimateAction

IndivisibleHoCoMD

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Mobilize Frederick

Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Mountain Maryland Movement

Nuclear Information & Resource Service

Progressive Maryland

Safe & Healthy Playing Fields

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee

The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

WISE

**SB 56 - CBF - FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Matt Stegman

Position: FAV



# 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).

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

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.

# **SB0056\_FAV\_Maryland Food System Resiliency Council**

Uploaded by: Michelle Caruso

Position: FAV



*"Cultivating a collaborative, sustainable, and equitable food system for all Maryland communities."*

**February 5, 2024**  
**2024 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY**  
**SB 0056: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction - Grants, Fund, and Surcharge**

**BILL: SB 0056: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction - Grants, Fund, and Surcharge**  
**COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**POSITION: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0056**

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record **in support of Senate Bill 0056**.

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council. The Food System Resiliency Council was established by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2021 legislative session to bring together 33 appointed council members from across the state, all with different points of entry and expertise to work toward a more resilient food system and address the food insecurity crisis due to COVID-19.

One of the key mandates of this Council is to develop equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of Maryland's food system. In the November 2023 Food System Resiliency Council Report to the Maryland Legislature, we recommended increasing the capacity for diverted organic materials. Currently, minimal facilities are available for food scrap diversion. Increasing food diversion and education on food waste reduction will help increase our food system resiliency and strengthen the food waste recovery infrastructure, building on emerging practices already established in the State. Food waste occur across the supply chain. It is important that legislation addresses problems throughout the process, with resources allocated to organic diversion, composting, food rescue, education, linking food waste to hunger, source separation, and upcycling.

Increased food resiliency can be achieved is by **passing SB 0056**, which will establish funds to provide infrastructure, programming, and education resources to prevent food waste. The passing of SB 0056 would create new resources for food waste prevention in schools and communities. Provide grants for programs and infrastructure to rescue food for direct food assistance, thereby, feeding people directly and increasing food security while decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. Upcycling food to decrease food being wasted and increase our circular bioeconomy through remanufacturing. Create grants for developing on-farm composting, school composting, and increase compost use to recycle nutrients from food and increase soil fertility.

Over one-third of the food produced in the United States is never eaten, wasting the calories and production resources used to grow food that could have fed more than 150 million people each year. The wasted food comprises 1/4 of our landfill content. It is stated by USEPA that reducing 50% of the



*"Cultivating a collaborative, sustainable, and equitable food system for all Maryland communities."*

food waste going to US landfills would be the equivalent of eliminating the greenhouse gas emissions from 21 coal-fired power plants or 15 million homes' energy use for a year.

Passing SB 0056 will benefit Maryland's Food System, create resources for important food system resiliency initiatives throughout the supply chain, and increase our circular bioeconomy. Each year, 119 billion lbs. of food is wasted in the US, equivalent to 1 lb./person/day, 130 billion meals, and at an economic value is \$408 billion per year. With 13.5 million US households being food-insecure at some time, there is a need to reduce this food waste impact. The SB 0056 legislation will create the resources needed to execute these important initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support of SB 0056.

Michael J. Wilson  
Co-Chair, Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

**SB0056\_FAV\_Montgomery County Food Council .pdf**

Uploaded by: Michelle Caruso

Position: FAV



February 5, 2024

**2024 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY**  
**SB0056: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction**

**BILL:** SB0056: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction - Grants, Fund, and Surcharge

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**POSITION:** Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0056

**BILL ANALYSIS:** Establishing the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program to award grants to eligible entities to assist with the costs of developing and implementing on-farm composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects; requiring the Department of the Environment to use funds from the Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund to support the Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste; authorizing the Department to establish a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge; etc.

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and thank you to Senator Hester for introducing this important legislation. The Montgomery County Food Council (MCFC) urges you to **SUPPORT** this bill to establish the On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program to award grants to assist with the costs of developing and implementing on-farm composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects.

This legislation addresses a critical need to expand Maryland's infrastructure for food waste prevention, edible food recovery, and diversion and recycling. Expanding on-farm composting and the availability of high-quality compost supports agriculture in Maryland by building healthier soils. Grants from this program will provide community benefits, including priority to projects that serve farms owned or operated by socially disadvantaged individuals or that engage small or beginning farming operations. Grants could also





provide funding for much needed cold storage infrastructure, an investment that would not only support food recovery, but also local growers, food assistance providers, and residents. This legislation provides a funding mechanism to help Maryland meet goals for climate, food security, and food system resilience.

According to the USDA 30-40% of food in the United States goes to waste<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, the recently released Montgomery County Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger states that 14% of Montgomery County students are food insecure<sup>2</sup>. Improved food waste and recovery infrastructure has the potential to greatly improve overall food security within the State of Maryland. Food recovery infrastructure can also have huge impacts on climate change. More than 85% of greenhouse gas emissions from landfilled food waste result from activities prior to food entering a landfill,<sup>3</sup> which points to the importance of a strong infrastructure around food waste and recovery.

This legislation would promote composting within the State of Maryland and increase the efforts to divert useful materials from disposal and support local communities through maximizing the use of resources, increasing food security, reducing pollution, and improving the economy . **For these reasons, the Montgomery County Food Council supports SB056 and urges a FAVORABLE REPORT for this bill.**

*The Montgomery County Food Council is a nonprofit organization that serves as the primary connection point for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, and residents around food system issues in our County. We bring together over 2,000 local and regional partners in community-wide education, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives. Our work cultivates a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable local food system by enhancing food access for the over 100,000 at risk for hunger, expanding food education opportunities for all residents, supporting our County's farms and food and beverage businesses, and addressing the impact of local food production, distribution, consumption and recycling on our natural resources*

For more information, please contact Michelle Caruso, Director of Policy and Partnerships, at the email and phone number below.

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<sup>1</sup> ["Why Should We Care about Food Waste?"](#) USDA

<sup>2</sup> [Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger](#). Montgomery County, Maryland.

<sup>3</sup> ["Preventing Wasted Food at Home."](#) EPA.



# **Sustainable Materials Manufacturing**

Uploaded by: Steven Hellem

Position: FAV

# Sustainable Materials Management America (SM<sup>2</sup>A)

Senator Katie Fry Hester

RE: Support for SB56

Dear Senator Hester,

On behalf the large and small company supporters of Sustainable Materials Manufacturing America (SM<sup>2</sup>A) we want to let you know of support for SB56.

SM<sup>2</sup>A is adhoc group of companies that manufacture products from what were once considered “waste” and turn them into products that can be sold in Maryland and across the country while driving economic development and job creation. We do not believe there is any such thing as waste, only marketable materials that have not found their next use.

We support SB 56 because it creates a Circular Economy Incentve Program, that has the purpose of awarding grants or other incentives to develop methods for upcycling and remanufacturing materials in the State that would otherwise be disposed of. It also defines recycling to mean any process in which recyclable materials are collected, separated, or processed and returned to the marketplace in the form of raw materials or products. In addition, it recognizes that the purpose of the fund would be to “Develop methods for upcycling and remanufacturing materials that would otherwise be disposed of.”

This legislation could create a foundation for the creation of a Close Looped Clean Energy Sustainable Materials Manufacturing Parks in Maryland that could address:

- End-of-life EV batteries
- Outdated and damaged windmill blades
- Solar Panels after useful life or damaged
- Port Sediments and Construction Materials

Senator Hester, we regret we were not able to provide these comments for the record as of the deadline, last night at 6PM, but we wanted you to know of our support for SB56 during the hearing this afternoon. We believe this bill can help take important steps in improving the environment and foster economic development and job growth in Maryland by identifying opportunities and cultivating innovative sustainable material manufacturing projects and activities.

We thank you for this opportunity to share our support for SB56.

Sincerely,



Steven B. Hellem

**Sustainable Materials Management America  
(SM<sup>2</sup>A)**

1455 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 400  
[Shellem@navista.net](mailto:Shellem@navista.net) Cell: (202) 441-0942

**SB56\_The Garden\_FAV[14].pdf**

Uploaded by: Tyahna Arnold

Position: FAV



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11890 Old Baltimore Pike, Ste G  
Beltsville, MD 20705  
info@thegarden.farm  
www.thegarden.farm  
(301) 957-4258

February 6, 2024

**Senate Bill 56 - Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction- Grants, Funds, Surcharge  
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**Position: Support**

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

The Garden International is a mushroom farm located in Prince George's County. At The Garden, our mission is to 'plantify' the world. We strive to build restorative, and sustainable systems that work in harmony with nature. We feel strongly that the tides are turning, and it is time to cultivate ecosystems that feed local communities and the economy. The Garden International writes to support Senate Bill 56– Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction- Grants, Funds, Surcharge. If enacted, the legislation will contribute to our mission of using minimal natural resources to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the Earth and all its inhabitants.

Senate Bill 56 would support our healthy food initiatives and serve as a funding opportunity for our Mushroom Learning Center. At The Garden International we are building a mushroom learning center where students will learn all about STEAM programs, workforce development, and even learn how to grow their own mushrooms at home. Additionally, Senate Bill 56 strongly supports our initiative of working with local farmer to reduce food waste, create new products, increase farm profitability, and provide high quality foods to our local community. If enacted, Senate Bill 56 would increase the STEAM presence in our communities, while also promoting the benefits of composting. The Garden recognizes that the decrease in food waste, increases the number of available foods for consumption. Reducing food waste contributes to efforts to address hunger and malnutrition. If enacted, we know Senate Bill 56 would promote positive impacts on resource conservation, environmental sustainability, economic efficiency, and food security.

This bill establishes necessary measures for expanding community development, educational opportunities like food literacy, public health, and reducing food waste. The Garden believes when communities have equitable access to food resources, it can contribute to social cohesion and a sense of shared purpose. Senate Bill 56 would allow a collaborative effort we can all work on to strengthen our community bonds. Therefore, we respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 56.

**For more information call or email:**

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | [therese@ashlargr.com](mailto:therese@ashlargr.com)

# **Support - SB0056 Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduct**

Uploaded by: Tyler Hough

Position: FAV



## Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035  
410-922-3426 | [www.mdfarmbureau.com](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com)

**To:** Senate Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee

**From:** Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

**RE: Support of SB0056 - Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge**

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Farm Bureau, representing 9,500 member families across the state, to express our support for SB0056 promoting on-farm composting. The Maryland Farm Bureau has a deep understanding of the agricultural landscape in our state, and we believe that on-farm composting is a sustainable and valuable practice that merits legislative backing.

We believe that investing in on-farm composting, compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects is not only an investment in the agricultural sector but also a proactive step towards achieving environmental sustainability and community well-being. Successful implementation of these projects not only benefits individual farmers but also contributes to the overall health and economic well-being of rural communities. Allowing farmers to make and process compost from both on and off the farm sources enhances resource efficiency by utilizing organic waste materials in a manner that benefits agricultural production.

We kindly urge you to consider our position as you deliberate on matters related to legislation impacting on-farm composting rights. We believe that supporting these rights not only benefits individual farmers but contributes to the overall prosperity and sustainability of Maryland's agricultural communities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you require any further information or clarification on our policy stance, please feel free to contact me at (443) 878-4045 or [though@marylandfb.org](mailto:though@marylandfb.org).

**MDFB Policy:** We support the right for Maryland farmers to make and process compost from both on and off the farm sources.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Supports SB0056**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Hough  
Director of Government Relations  
Maryland Farm Bureau

**SB56 Jones testimony submitted 02.05.24.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carol Adaire Jones

Position: FWA



## **SB56: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge**

### **Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**February 6, 2024**

Position: Favorable with Amendment

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I urge a favorable report on SB56 with amendments to conform it with forthcoming legislation from Delegate Boyce.

Maryland has commendable goals to reduce food waste and increase organic recycling. These efforts have significant co-benefits, improving food security for our residents, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food rotting in landfills or burning in incinerators, and enables our farmers to diversify their income and reduce climate-polluting synthetic fertilizers. But we know that a major limiting factor for the expansion of infrastructure and programs reducing food waste and recycling organics is cost. Maryland has no dedicated funding streams for reducing and diverting food waste.

Maryland has made great strides reducing methane emissions from landfills, with more stringent methane regulations on landfills. Controlling the amount of methane from a landfill is great, but another effective strategy is to reduce the amount of methane-producing organic waste from entering the landfill in the first place.

Funding practices like cold storage for food rescue, on-farm compost, school grants, and upcycling through a modest \$2 per ton surcharge on waste disposed of at landfills and incinerators will provide tangible benefits and fund Maryland's goals and its unfunded programs, like school grants for food waste reduction and composting, which passed in 2022 but requires an annual appropriation.

SB56 funds food waste and organic diversion through four grant programs:

#### **Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program (MDE)**

This fund will give MDE the ability to fund infrastructure, programs, and education that reduces, rescues, and diverts wasted food in the state. Examples of these could be rescuing food to feed people or animals, like expanding cold storage or connecting farmers with suitable food waste generators.

#### **On-Farm Organics Diversion and Composting Grant Program (MDA)**

While farmers may be interested in generating their own compost or using compost, the practice does require specialized equipment, training, and has other costs. These grants will help defray those start-up costs and enable MDA to better support farmers as they seek to incorporate compost and organic recycling into their operations.

#### **School Waste Reduction and Composting Program (MSDE)**

These grants were created in 2022 and funded in 2023. Applications for 2024 closed in early January and are currently under review. These grants fund school waste reduction (like share tables and food donation) as well as composting.

#### **Circular Economy Incentive Program**

This program will award grants or other incentives to develop methods for upcycling and remanufacturing materials.

This model is successful in [numerous other states](#) and has had positive impacts on local communities, economies, and the environment.

**Amendment:**

Delegate Boyce has a very similar bill still in drafting. The two bills have similar intents, but Delegate Boyce's version has additional changes that were worked out with MDE and MDA after the pre-filing deadline. The changes are designed to make the legislation easier for the departments to implement the legislation and grant programs.

The changes clarify agency administrative costs, widens the scope of projects to include organics recycling as opposed to just composting, updates the timeline to better align with existing agency processes, allows for the agencies to access surcharge revenue while setting up the grant programs, and stipulates that an applicant may not receive a grant from more than one of the programs in the same calendar year.

We recommend that the Committee conform SB56 to the language of Delegate Boyce's bill to incorporate these changes.

Thank you and we urge a favorable report,

Sincerely yours,

*Carol Adaire Jones*

Carol Adaire Jones  
Silver Spring MD 2091

# **SB56 Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants**

Uploaded by: Emily Ranson

Position: FWA



**SB56: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment  
February 6, 2024**

Position: Favorable with Amendment

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action and the undersigned 17 organizations urge a favorable report on SB56 with amendments to conform it with forthcoming legislation from Delegate Boyce.

Maryland has commendable goals to reduce food waste and increase organic recycling. These efforts have significant co-benefits, improving food security for our residents, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food rotting in landfills or burning in incinerators, and enables our farmers to diversify their income and reduce climate-polluting synthetic fertilizers. But we know that a major limiting factor for the expansion of infrastructure and programs reducing food waste and recycling organics is cost. Maryland has no dedicated funding streams for reducing and diverting food waste.

Maryland has made great strides reducing methane emissions from landfills, with more stringent methane regulations on landfills. Controlling the amount of methane from a landfill is great, but another effective strategy is to reduce the amount of methane-producing organic waste from entering the landfill in the first place.

Funding practices like cold storage for food rescue, on-farm compost, school grants, and upcycling through a modest \$2 per ton surcharge on waste disposed of at landfills and incinerators will provide tangible benefits and fund Maryland's goals and its unfunded programs, like school grants for food waste reduction and composting, which passed in 2022 but requires an annual appropriation.

SB56 funds food waste and organic diversion through four grant programs:

**Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program (MDE)**

This fund will give MDE the ability to fund infrastructure, programs, and education that reduces, rescues, and diverts wasted food in the state. Examples of these could be rescuing food to feed people or animals, like expanding cold storage or connecting farmers with suitable food waste generators.

**On-Farm Organics Diversion and Composting Grant Program (MDA)**

While farmers may be interested in generating their own compost or using compost, the practice does require specialized equipment, training, and has other costs. These grants will help defray those start-up costs and enable MDA to better support farmers as they seek to incorporate compost and organic recycling into their operations.

**School Waste Reduction and Composting Program (MSDE)**

These grants were created in 2022 and funded in 2023. Applications for 2024 closed in early January and are currently under review. These grants fund school waste reduction (like share tables and food donation) as well as composting.

### **Circular Economy Incentive Program**

This program will award grants or other incentives to develop methods for upcycling and remanufacturing materials.

This model is successful in [numerous other states](#) and has had positive impacts on local communities, economies, and the environment.

### **Amendment:**

Delegate Boyce has a very similar bill still in drafting. The two bills have similar intents, but Delegate Boyce's version has additional changes that were worked out with MDE and MDA after the pre-filing deadline. The changes are designed to make the legislation easier for the departments to implement the legislation and grant programs.

The changes clarify agency administrative costs, widens the scope of projects to include organics recycling as opposed to just composting, updates the timeline to better align with existing agency processes, allows for the agencies to access surcharge revenue while setting up the grant programs, and stipulates that an applicant may not receive a grant from more than one of the programs in the same calendar year.

We recommend that the Committee conform SB56 to the language of Delegate Boyce's bill to incorporate these changes.

Thank you and we urge a favorable report,

Emily Ranson  
Clean Water Action  
[eranson@cleanwater.org](mailto:eranson@cleanwater.org)

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Environmental Justice Ministry  
Lunch out of Landfills  
#CoalFreeCurtisBay  
Go Green OC  
Zero Waste Montgomery County  
Prince George's County Food Equity Council  
Less Plastic Please  
Curtis Bay Association  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Echotopia LLC  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Regenerative Solutions  
ACQ Climate  
Green Sanctuary committee, Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring

Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Maryland Legislative Coalition - Climate Justice Wing

# **WG Written Testimony - SB 56 - Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Manuel Geraldo

Position: FWA



1000 Maine Avenue, SW | Suite 700 | Washington, DC 20024 | [www.washingtongas.com](http://www.washingtongas.com)

**TESTIMONY**  
**WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY**  
**EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

**SENATE BILL 56**

Washington Gas respectfully submits this statement in **SUPPORT** of Senate Bill 56, *Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge* (SB 56).

Washington Gas proudly provides safe, reliable natural gas service to more than 1.2 million customers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Washington Gas has been providing energy to residential, commercial, government, and industrial customers for more than 175 years. Washington Gas expresses our support for SB 56 with amendments as outlined below.

The waste sector accounts for a significant portion of the State’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; landfills and wastewater treatment plants accounted for approximately 7 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, or approximately 8% of the State’s gross GHG emissions, as of 2020.<sup>1</sup> MDE recently found that landfills were the single largest source of methane emissions in Maryland, and that these emissions have been historically underestimated and are approximately four times higher than previously thought.<sup>2</sup> While the overall reduction and diversion of solid waste and food waste is important in its own right and can help to reduce GHG emissions at the margin, there are infrastructure and programs that can repurpose or transform the food and solid waste that is inherent. Namely, capturing biogas from food and solid waste and upgrading it into biomethane (or renewable natural gas) that can be used locally in Maryland’s natural gas distribution system to replace conventional methane gas (usually imported from other states), reducing GHG emissions from landfill operations in the process.<sup>3</sup>

Related to this bill, a particularly complementary area is creating renewable natural gas from food waste diverted from landfills. Other than creating a valuable and lower carbon gas, these projects

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<sup>1</sup> MDE. [2020 Greenhouse Gas Inventory](#) (Sep. 24, 2022). In the ‘Summary’ tab, emissions from “Landfills” and “Wastewater Management” add to 7.21748 million metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, which corresponds to 8.4856% of Gross Emissions, which was 85.05523 million metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. All numbers use a 20-year GWP.

<sup>2</sup> MDE. [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#) (Dec. 28, 2023). Page 52

<sup>3</sup> EPA. [Renewable Natural Gas](#) (Aug. 3, 2023).



can have several co-benefits, including creating organic byproduct solids that can be composted with other green waste and purchased by major soil product producers for soil enrichment commodities. Several utilities and counties in other states are working on organic and food waste diversion projects for making renewable natural gas to blend into the natural gas distribution network:

- **Minnesota:** [CenterPoint Energy and Hennepin County](#)
- **New Jersey:** [South Jersey Industries and Linden, NJ](#)
- **California:** [SoCalGas and Southern California Counties](#)

The five (5) possible amendments across three (3) areas of the bill suggested here can augment the proposed grant programs, specifically the Food Waste Reduction and Diversion Grants Program and Circular Economy Incentive Program, to encourage GHG emission reduction via beneficial renewable natural gas projects. While the utilities are not expected to be direct recipients of any funding with these changes, these funds can support project developers and municipal waste facilities and reduce barriers to making these projects a reality.

#### Amendments:

##### **Area #1: Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund**

- Suggested Change #1
  - a. Applicable Bill Text: 9–17A–04 (B)(1-3) - page 10, lines 2-8.
  - b. Description: Add a fourth criterion for potential grant awardees to consider projects that reduce negative environmental impacts from food waste and solid waste, including greenhouse gas emissions.
  - c. Impact: As written, there is no GHG or emissions-related language anywhere in the bill, although this would be a 2<sup>nd</sup>-order benefit of reducing overall waste. This language would explicitly recognize and allow MDE to reward programs and projects that create these GHG emission reduction benefits.
- Suggested Change #2
  - a. Applicable Bill Text: 9–17A–04 (B)(2) - page 10, lines 2-8.
  - b. Description: Change the “AND” to an “OR”.
  - c. Impact: As written, it is unclear whether a given project or program must satisfy all or at least one of these criteria.

##### **Area #2: Food Waste Reduction and Diversion Grants Program**

- Suggested Change #3
  - a. Applicable Bill Text: 9–17A–05 (C) - page 12, lines 16-18.
  - b. Description: Amend/add to the language describing the purpose of the grant program to more explicitly encourage infrastructure and programming that would “repurpose” or “transform” food waste.
  - c. Impact: As written, the bill only encourages “reducing, rescuing, and diverting” waste, but not repurposing waste for other beneficial uses.
- Suggested Change #4
  - a. Applicable Bill Text: 9–17A–05 (E)(1)(I – IV) - pages 12-13.
  - b. Description: Amend/add to the types of eligible projects under the grant program to more explicitly enable food waste-to-RNG projects, such as “*Process source-separated food waste for a productive use, including for meeting local energy needs*” or similar.

- c. Impact: Allows infrastructure or programs that would collect or process diverted food waste for upgrading to RNG to receive funds under this grant program.

**Area #3: Circular Economy Incentive Program**

- Suggested Change #5
  - a. Applicable Bill Text: 9–17A–06 (E)(3) - page 15, lines 1-3.
  - b. Description: Amend/add to the language describing the purpose of the grant program to fill gaps in infrastructure for “repurposing” or “transforming” materials that would otherwise be disposed of, instead of just “collecting, processing, recycling, or reusing materials”.
  - c. Impact: Emerging and established techniques for the thermal conversion of waste materials (e.g., pyrolysis) could be considered “upcycling” or “remanufacturing” waste materials. These can use waste to create lower carbon hydrogen, renewable natural gas, or other biomass-to-energy methods other than anaerobic digestion, and can provide another avenue for creating thermal energy other than for food or organic waste.

Washington Gas hopes to continue working with the sponsor and the committee and urges the committee to support SB 56 with the amendments offered in this testimony.

Thank you for consideration of this information, our amendments, and I am available for any questions or additional information.

**CONTACT:**

Manny Geraldo, State Government Relations and Public Policy Manager  
M 202.924.4511 | [manuel.geraldo@washgas.com](mailto:manuel.geraldo@washgas.com)

# **Testimony for SB56 - Food Waste and Solid Waste Re**

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FWA

**Testimony for SB56: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge (2-5-24)**

This testimony is to urge a favorable report with amendment on SB56: Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge.

A major limiting factor for the expansion of infrastructure and programs reducing food waste and recycling organics is cost. Maryland has no dedicated funding streams for reducing and diverting food waste. This legislation would address this significant need.

Maryland has made great strides reducing methane emissions from landfills, with more stringent methane regulations on landfills. Controlling the amount of methane from a landfill is a greatly important step, but another effective strategy is to reduce the amount of methane-producing organic waste from entering the landfill in the first place.

I have been involved as a volunteer in trying to establish new infrastructure to divert food waste, and I can testify first-hand to the difficulty of accomplishing this without dedicated funding.

Funding practices like cold storage for food rescue, on-farm compost, school grants, and upcycling through a modest \$2 per ton surcharge on waste disposed of at landfills and incinerators will provide tangible benefits and fund Maryland's goals and its unfunded programs, like school grants for food waste reduction and composting, which passed in 2022 but requires an annual appropriation.

The four grant programs proposed in this legislation would expand the waste reduction infrastructure that Maryland badly needs.

**Amendment:** Delegate Boyce has a very similar bill still in drafting that adds significant improvements to the intent and purpose of SB56.

I urge that the Committee conform SB56 to the language of Delegate Boyce's bill to incorporate these changes, and then give a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor  
11-G Laurel Hill Road  
Greenbelt, MD 20770

# **SB0056\_UNF\_NWRA\_Food Waste & Solid Waste Reduction**

Uploaded by: Pam Kasemeyer

Position: UNF

**Maryland-Delaware Solid Waste Association**

a chapter of the

**National  
Waste & Recycling  
Association<sup>SM</sup>**

Collect. Recycle. Innovate.

TO: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Members, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
The Honorable Katie Fry Hester

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Andrew G. Vetter

DATE: February 6, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 56 – *Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction – Grants, Fund, and Surcharge*

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The Maryland Delaware Solid Waste Association (MDSWA), a chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association, is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in the State of Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. MDSWA and its members **oppose** Senate Bill 56

Senate Bill 56 proposes to establish an On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant Program that is funded through the establishment of a new solid waste disposal surcharge on the final disposition of solid waste in the State. The solid waste disposal surcharge will impose a surcharge of \$2 per ton of solid waste processed by a refuse disposal system. The surcharge must also be adjusted every two years after establishment in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for the Mid-Atlantic Division and gives the Maryland Department of the Environment the authority to evaluate the surcharge to determine whether it should be increased.

MDSWA does not object to the intent of this legislation, which is to identify ways to offset the costs of developing and implementing on-farm composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects. However, we do not believe that the proposed surcharge is the most effective way to accomplish these goals. Any new solid waste disposal surcharge will most likely be passed on to the generators of solid waste, meaning nearly every household and business in Maryland would have higher charges for waste disposal. At a time when household budgets are being squeezed by inflation and other economic pressures, legislation resulting in higher waste disposal costs is not prudent. In addition to increased costs for consumers, this legislation would also result in increased costs for local governments. This surcharge would apply equally to the public and private refuse disposal systems. Local governments are already struggling financially to provide essential public services. A new cost in the form of a surcharge would place another burden on local governments and taxpayers.

Increased disposal fees will lead to more out of state waste disposal; higher collection rates and transportation costs, which will be passed down to the consumers and businesses; and will further challenge the efficient and effective operation of the State's current recycling facilities as they seek to manage market volatility and work to increase the effectiveness of their material processing functions.

**For more information call:**

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer

J. Steven Wise

Danna L. Kauffman

Andrew G. Vetter

410-244-7000