

February 16, 2024

To: Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Re: SB686 Covered Electronic Devices Recycling Program – Establishment

My name is Yosef Green and I am an owner of LS Enterprise Group, a local small business electronics recycling company based in Owings Mills, Maryland. We are an R2v3 certified company that has been in the industry for almost a decade. We regularly recycle tens of thousands of units a month and are a business that prides itself on diverting hundreds of thousands of units of otherwise scrapped electronics from landfills. Our networks of vendors, customers, colleagues, and contractors are global and have given us a robust insight into the state of electronics recycling and data security practices worldwide. I am a member of the Reverse Logistics Association, Maryland Recycling Network, and have been affiliated with ITAD, E-Scrap, and been featured in a number of recycling publications.

I am writing in support of SB686 Covered Electronic Devices Recycling Program – Establishment as it provides MDE the authority to establish effective certification requirements for authorized recyclers.

In my opinion the State of Maryland's policies when it comes to protecting consumers, the environment, and even manufacturers leave a lot of room for abuse and exploitation by less than scrupulous peddlers of "recycling services". Although it is true that government agencies require their recycling vendors to be certified in some fashion, there are 2 remaining issues to be addressed.

- 1) Frequently the scope of the certification is not paid attention to. For example
 - a) a certified company wins a contract to recycle medical equipment, but their scope only allows them to handle computers.
 - b) A certified company scoped to handle focus materials wins a contract to recycle computers, but data security/sanitization is not in their scope at all.
- 2) There are no laws in place requiring certified recyclers to be used by consumers, manufacturers, private corporations, or any other level of life cycle of the device.

I can personally attest to a number of times that I was asked to be involved in resolving complications that arose from under-certified "recyclers" or ones with no certifications at all mishandling sensitive end-of-life electronics. They were chosen/won a bid due to their ability to undercut actual recyclers who needed to figure legitimate expenses into their operating costs. These expenses allowed the certified recyclers to do things like: guarantee focus materials are recycled/reused properly, ensure the security of private data, and guard the physical safety of their employees.

In one such instance CRT monitors were being buried in the ground or abandoned in shipping containers. In another case, data-sensitive products made their way out of the country into the hands of criminals who attempted blackmail and identity theft on the original owners. In a third instance, hospital systems faced potential lawsuits and serious liability when they asked their downstream recycling vendor for proof of destruction of patient files and the under-certified recycling vendor was unable to provide it.

The bottom line is that there needs to be government regulations in place requiring *all* electronics recycling to be done by vetted, certified recycling companies. Globally recognized independently verified certifications **must** be the norm required for a vendor to be allowed to engage in electronics recycling of any kind. Full transparency regarding scope of certification must be regular practice and vetted by all prospective customers. There must be penalties for infractions to motivate unscrupulous vendors to follow the regulations.

A short list of such certifications is R2v3, Rios, and E-Stewards. Supplementary certifications like relevant ISOs must be taken into account as well.

LS Enterprise Group stands ready to work with the State of Maryland in improving the topography of electronics recycling in 2024. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Yosef Green

LS Enterprise Group