



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

House Bill 1318

***Environment - Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and
Diversion Fund and Grant Programs - Established***

Position: Support with Amendments
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Date: February 31, 2024
From: Gabrielle Leach

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS HB 1318 WITH AMENDMENTS**.

Bill Summary

As proposed, HB 1318 would establish the On-Farm Organics Diversion and Recycling Grant Program (Program). The Program would award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement on-farm organics recycling and compost use, wasted food prevention, and food rescue. The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) would administer the Program, in consultation with MDE. The bill would also establish the Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program to be administered by MDE, in consultation with MDA. Finally, HB 1318 would establish a solid waste disposal surcharge of \$2 per ton on the final disposal of solid waste in the State, which would go to the referenced grant programs as well as the Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste.

The amendments offered by the sponsor for House Bill 1318 revise the eligibility requirements to participate in the Program. In addition, as amended, House Bill 1318 would increase the estimated annual revenue that shall be used for administrative costs from “no more than 10%” to “no more than 25%”, which will assist MDE, MDA, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in covering the additional administrative costs associated with implementing the Programs.

Position Rationale

MDE supports HB 1318 as amended, as it will help establish a reasonable surcharge at refuse disposal systems to help establish grants for organics recycling infrastructure. According to a 2016 Waste Characterization Study conducted in the State of Maryland, approximately 18% of Maryland’s waste stream consists of food residuals, making food residuals the State’s most prominent waste stream. This bill will provide the grant funding necessary to help scale organics recycling in the State.

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For the reasons detailed above, MDE asks for a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for HB 1318.