



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 5, 2025

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 338 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: State Buildings and State Highways - Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

This legislation serves to improve the disposal methods of yard waste generated in the course of gardening, landscaping, and tree trimming activities occurring on the grounds of state facilities through the prohibition of single-use plastic containers for such purposes. It also requires that yard waste collected on the grounds of a state building or state highway be disposed of at in-state organics recycling facilities, natural wood waste recycling facilities, or state facilities with the on-site capacity to create mulch or soil amendments. The Department of Natural Resources supports this effort.

Furthermore, the legislation provides an important exemption for the disposal of noxious weeds or invasive species – “solarization” is a best practice for the eradication of these types of plants. “Solarization” is the practice of placing these plants in such plastic bags and allowing them to “bake” in the sun, this in turn causes the destruction of the plants including seeds to ensure that there is no further spread of the species.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Disposing of organic plant waste such as leaves, garden waste, lawn cuttings, weeds, and prunings in single-use plastic containers is generally poor practice in that plastic does not decompose at the same rate as yard waste and prevents effective composting of organic material.

BILL EXPLANATION

This bill would prohibit a person from disposing of yard waste collected on the grounds of a State building or State highway in a certain container; require a person to collect yard waste on the grounds of a State building or State highway in a certain container; require all yard waste collected on the grounds of a State building or State highway to be disposed of in a certain manner, and generally relates to the collection and disposal of yard waste on the grounds of State buildings and State highways.

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