



**Bill: SB599** On-Farm Organics and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Programs - Established  
**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**Hearing Date:** February 24, 2026  
**Position: Support**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

Trash Free Maryland strongly supports SB599, which will:

- establish the On-Farm Organics Diversion and Recycling Grant Program in the Department of Agriculture to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement on-farm organics recycling, compost use, wasted food prevention, and food rescue; and to
- establish the Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program and the County Wasted Food Reduction Block Grant Program in the Department of the Environment to fund certain projects that reduce, rescue, and divert wasted food. Eligible grant projects include infrastructure development, collection, education, and technical assistance to support the transition from single-use food serviceware to durable and reusable food serviceware.

Trash Free Maryland works toward a state that is free of trash and litter, and where land and waterways are safe and healthy for all to enjoy. We see grant programs to divert valuable materials from disposal and to facilitate transitions from single-use to durable food service items as part of a critical bridge of seed funding investments toward microplastic reductions and a trash-free future.

Trash Free Maryland urges you to support this legislation for the following reasons:

- Single-use, disposable food serviceware contributes to unnecessary waste and plastic pollution found in our litter cleanups and as a contaminant in recycling. A transition to durable and reusable food service ware can reduce plastic waste, microplastic production, and pollution in litter and recycling/composting processes.
- The shift from single-use to reusable food serviceware alternatives can require an initial investment in durable replacement products or dishwashers. Providing one-time funding to support this transition can enable a lasting switch.
- Providing technical support and a state grant program will help leverage scarce dollars to share lessons learned and best practices and to take advantage of economies of scale where possible.
- Microplastics are an increasing concern for both environmental and public health. Providing grants to support a transition to reusable food service ware and to organics recycling projects that produce minimally-contaminated soil amendments would be a step toward reducing plastic pollution.
- Reducing and diverting wasted food supports Maryland's climate and waste reduction goals.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report on SB599.

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