

ENHANCED IMPACT LLC

Based in Great Mills, Maryland; serving clients leaving only footprints across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Favorable Testimony for SB599

On-Farm Organics and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Programs

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Hearing Date: February 24, 2026

Esteemed Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

I am writing to you today in strong support of **SB599 On-Farm Organics and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program Establishment**. In 2025 I founded Enhanced Impact LLC to support mission driven non-profit organizations and sustainable businesses. I am also an adjunct instructor for a LEAD211 Exploring Environmental Advocacy at St Mary's College. I have seen firsthand non-profits, small businesses, friends, and neighbors who are interested in implementing local compost systems that can support communal use struggle for start-up funding.

The broad positive implications of composting and food diversion are evident. Food waste in the United States has huge costs on our wallets, infrastructure, and economy, but there are certain practical limitations for creating system wide solutions. When people consume food in public places, whether at work, school, or play, businesses, restaurants, or when smaller homes, apartments, or condos don't have the physical space or infrastructure to manage compost facilities themselves, they need a safe, convenient, collective way to turn organic waste to nutrient-dense compost.

LeafGrow, compost created from collected food waste from Prince George's and Montgomery County, is a particularly valuable and high quality product. Every person in each locality in the state should have the ability and accessibility to compost. The results are economically beneficial as well in reducing costs for solid waste hauling and keeping local economies vibrant from turning "garbage" to nutritious, healthy soil.

Each one of the proposed grant programs in the bill contributes to a valuable sector of the waste stream and has clear benefits supporting:

- (1) Farmers and their on farm operations, inclusive of urban agriculture
- (2) Nonprofits and their programming around waste diversion and education
- (3) Counties
- (4) Soil Conservation Districts
- (5) Higher Education Institutions, which have wide community benefits and implications beyond the direct beneficiaries of the students, faculty, and staff

On a personal level, I compost at home, using a small scale backyard bin, but recognize that larger institutions, such as local colleges, and commercial businesses including restaurants need larger, system wide support for implementing compost and food waste diversion programs. Compost is a great soil base to plant in, whether for tree plantings, vegetables or flowers. I've used the Maryland Environmental Service product LeafGrow for community tree plantings, free food gardens when volunteering with the Southern Maryland Sierra Club and for my home vegetable garden. **To transform personal strides to community wide strides, we need strong support from our elected representatives for food diversion and compost initiatives.**

Maryland has taken meaningful steps already to encourage a more sustainable society, address food diversion, and create a more circular local economy. Composting was mentioned in the Maryland Climate Plan, but the funding and specificity around implementation has been lacking. This committee has passed food waste diversion legislation before, but the grant legislations have been introduced and stagnated for years. The need for addressing waste is only growing with each passing year.

I want to close with a note of sincere gratitude to the sponsors who have worked hard with stakeholders to bring a thoughtful approach to crafting these programs. I appreciate all of the considerations the committee makes on a wide variety of issues and encourage a favorable vote on SB599 this year to take the next step to delivering solutions to Maryland businesses, nonprofits, and communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rosa E. P. Hance

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Founder

[Enhanced Impact LLC](#)