

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

### **HB 429/SB 599**

To the Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Swimmer. I live in Baltimore, Maryland, and I urge a **favorable** report on HB 429/SB 599. Thank you in advance for your consideration of support.

Food is often discarded into already overcrowded landfills, costing the average household \$2,913 annually. Both landfills and incinerators affect low-income families the most because they are located across the country, with 58% of them near these communities. Those who reside in neighborhoods near a landfill or incinerator are more susceptible to cancer or asthma. On top of being incredibly harmful to people, landfills are incredibly harmful to the environment, as the 48 landfills located across Maryland emit the same amount of methane as 720,500 gas-powered cars, as of 2023. As someone who resides in downtown Baltimore, relatively close to the incinerators, I have seen firsthand the large amount of smoke and smog these facilities emit and can only imagine how detrimental it is to one's health.

This bill builds on Maryland's 2021 food waste law and 2023 landfill methane standards. It has been refined over four years with stakeholder input from MDE, MDA, Maryland Environmental Health Network, and others.

This bill will:

- Support local farmers
- Fund infrastructure, programs, and education

- Provides flexible, annual funding to counties

I support bill HB 429/SB 599 for multiple reasons. This bill would provide support for Maryland residents, businesses, and schools to save resources and further understand how to prevent food waste. As a public school student, I understand how important saving money and resources is, and this bill would directly benefit others in a similar position.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look to this committee to give HB 429/SB 599 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Sarah Swimmer