



February 3, 2026

To: Maryland House Environment & Transportation Committee

Re: HB164 State Buildings & State Highways – Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste Support

Maryland Recycling Network members are public and private sectors recyclers and recycling advocates. Our members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We promote sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's") of materials otherwise destined for disposal and the purchase of products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through educational programs, advocacy, technical assistance, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

We support HB 164

Yard "waste" such as leaves, grass and branches, is commonly collected for composting by local governments throughout Maryland. In fact, MDE's most recent waste and recycling report showed 341,961 tons were collected and managed at 23 permitted composting facilities operating in 13 Maryland counties. This is a tremendous success story. Adding yard waste collected from state-owned properties, including highways, will only add to our success. Throughout our state we are creating a usable lawn product and avoiding disposal of methane producing organic material. This is a win for Maryland's environment!

We thank Delegate Lehman for introducing this bill and urge its speedy passage.

The Maryland Recycling Network is a resource for legislators and others interested in recycling and waste reduction. Contact us at phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, or 301-725-2508, or MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044, if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Houstle
Executive Director