

HOUSE BILL 817

M3

11r2289

By: **Delegate Mizeur**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2011

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Environment – Composting**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of the Environment to maintain certain
4 information on its Web site related to composting for certain purposes; requiring
5 the Department, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the
6 Maryland Environmental Service, to study certain matters related to
7 composting and to make certain recommendations related to the promotion of
8 composting, including certain information; requiring the Department, on or
9 before a certain date, to report its findings and recommendations under the
10 study to the General Assembly including a certain summary; and generally
11 relating to composting.

12 BY adding to
13 Article – Environment
14 Section 9–1722
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2007 Replacement Volume and 2010 Supplement)

17 WHEREAS, Composting extends the life of landfills by diverting organic
18 material from the landfills and providing a less costly alternative to conventional
19 methods of treating contaminated soil; and

20 WHEREAS, Composting organic material that has been diverted from landfills
21 reduces the formation of leachate and the production of methane in the landfills; and

22 WHEREAS, Composting filters pollutants in stormwater runoff, preventing the
23 pollutants from reaching surface water resources; and

24 WHEREAS, Composting has been shown to prevent erosion and silting on
25 embankments parallel to creeks, lakes, and rivers and to prevent erosion and turf loss
26 on roadsides, hillsides, playing fields, and golf courses; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Composting reduces or eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers
2 and promotes higher yields of agricultural crops; and

3 WHEREAS, The composting process degrades and in some cases completely
4 eliminates wood preservatives, pesticides, and both chlorinated and nonchlorinated
5 hydrocarbons in contaminated soils; and

6 WHEREAS, The average U.S. household generates 650 pounds of compostable
7 material every year; and

8 WHEREAS, Individuals, businesses, and groups interested in composting or
9 expanding a composting operation have expressed confusion about the current State
10 laws and regulations governing these activities; and

11 WHEREAS, Better understanding of and communication about the laws and
12 regulations governing composting may increase composting in the State; now,
13 therefore,

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
15 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 **Article – Environment**

17 **9–1722.**

18 **THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAINTAIN INFORMATION ON ITS WEB SITE TO**
19 **EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT COMPOSTING AND TO PROMOTE COMPOSTING IN**
20 **THE STATE AS A PART OF THE DEPARTMENT’S EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE WASTE**
21 **DIVERSION.**

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

23 (a) The Department of the Environment, in consultation with the
24 Department of Agriculture and the Maryland Environmental Service, shall:

25 (1) study composting in the State, including any laws or regulations
26 governing composting by individuals or businesses, including businesses offering
27 composting services; and

28 (2) make recommendations about how to promote composting in the
29 State, including any necessary programmatic, legislative, or regulatory changes.

30 (b) On or before January 1, 2012, the Department of the Environment shall
31 report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly, in accordance with
32 § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, including a summary of the laws and
33 regulations governing composting.

1 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
2 July 1, 2011.