

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 217 (Delegates Love and Ruth)
Environment and Transportation

Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling and Waste Systems in Maryland

This bill establishes the Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling and Waste Systems in Maryland to review the Maryland Recycling Act (MRA) and study the recycling and waste systems in Maryland. The task force must make recommendations on how to update MRA to focus on the recycling and diversion of materials to help achieve the State’s recycling and greenhouse gas reduction goals and the feasibility of implementing regional recycling and waste disposal facilities, including (1) the locations of possible facility sites, as specified; (2) cost-sharing opportunities; (3) developing service networks; and (4) advancing principles of zero waste. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) must provide staff for the task force. Task force members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses. By June 30, 2023, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022, and terminates December 31, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for MDE are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: Any costs for local governments to participate in the task force are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources. Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The solid waste infrastructure in Maryland consists of both permitted and nonpermitted facilities, and solid waste is managed through a combination of recycling, composting, landfilling, energy recovery, and exporting for disposal or recycling. There are several examples of regional waste management partnerships in the State.

Maryland's recycling policy is guided by MRA, which sets mandatory recycling rates for State government and local jurisdictions, as well as a voluntary statewide waste diversion goal of 60% and a voluntary statewide recycling goal of 55% by 2020. Each county (including Baltimore City) must prepare a recycling plan that addresses how the jurisdiction will achieve its mandatory recycling rate. The plan must be submitted to MDE's Office of Recycling for approval when the jurisdiction submits its water and sewerage plan at least every 10 years. At least every 2 years, each county must also submit a progress report to MDE, which must include any revision of or amendment to the county plan that has been adopted.

MDE's Office of Recycling submits annual reports, in coordination with the Maryland Environmental Service, to the Governor and the General Assembly on specified information related to recycling in Maryland. Beginning in 2009, MDE has combined the *Maryland Waste Diversion Activities Report* and the *Solid Waste Managed in Maryland Report* into one report, the *Maryland Solid Waste Management and Diversion Report*.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 807 of 2021 passed the House with amendments and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

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