



**TESTIMONY TO THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION**

**HB589 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT -ORGANICS RECYCLING AND WASTE
DIVERSION-FOOD RESIDUALS**

POSITION: SUPPORT

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Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

My name is Keith Losoya and I come to you today from Waste Neutral, a residential and commercial food scrap hauler based out of Baltimore. Waste Neutral is the largest hauler of food scraps in the Baltimore metro area with a mission of expanding composting in Maryland. To that end, we have diverted close to fifty million pounds away from landfills and incineration: towards composting facilities to benefit our soil, air, water, and local economy.

As many of you know, my fellow supporters, in cooperation with state agency representatives and experts in this area have spent the last four years building the infrastructure and laying the legislative groundwork to assist the state with enacting the necessary and responsible legislation to broaden the waste diversion and recycling of organics. My fellow supporters will outline the multitude of reasons why this bill should have its day. For this reason, my remarks will not target the areas of concern, but instead focus more on how this bill poses a wonderful solution.

However, I would like to make one point before I get there. It is a well-accepted fact that nature does not create waste. Rather, the “waste” of one product is the food for another, such as the acorn is the seedling for soil to grow more oak trees. I mention this because the bill in question seeks to return our state to a model that reflects the perfect processes of nature.

HB589 will responsibly expand the demand and necessary infrastructure to divert this valuable resource that some call “waste” away from being burned or buried unnecessarily and towards its intended use; being returned to the soil to grow more food. The solution I would like to highlight is economic because, in addition to the environmental merits, this bill presents development opportunities. If it is implemented, it will mean more jobs and capital goods investment in this burgeoning industry. I am admittedly not an expert in business economics, but I can speak with authority from the position of small business in this industry. We are creating good paying jobs with dignity for our community and the opportunities this bill would put on the table would allow a great many business like ours to continue that trend. The rate of growth has also accelerated as of late. This leads me to believe that businesses in the state are ready to make the switch to source separation of organics.

Our company exists as a primary example of the public interest in community and institutional scale composting. With a payment-based platform we have been able to enlist residential communities and many of the largest commercial and institutional cafeterias in the Baltimore metro area. Since we first engaged with these sustainability leaders almost ten years ago, I am still impressed at the ease of their transition to separate organics and cultural commitment to maximum waste diversion for recycling.

Given this and the testimonies of my fellow supporters, I think it comes as no surprise that I would like to voice my support for HB589. In absence of systematic legislation, the private sector can and will do its best to meet this demand. I fear though that our state will never reach the full environmental and economic benefits of large-scale composting without the support of legislation like this. Please move forward with HB589 for our environment and local economy.