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**HB 988**

February 26, 2020

**TO:** Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee  
Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 988 - Environment - Business Recycling Reporting Requirements

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chairman Barve, Chair Davis, Vice-Chair Stein, Vice-Chair Dumais and Members of the Committees, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill 988.

House Bill 988 would require businesses, which includes non-profit entities, to submit to the county in which it is located a recycling report on or before March 1 of each year.

Under the Maryland Recycling Act (Maryland Environmental Article, Title 9-505), counties must produce a recycling plan that provides for a certain recycling rate of the waste stream by weight. For each county with a population over 150,000, which includes Baltimore City, the required recycling rate is 35%.

Each county must submit to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) an annual Tonnage Reporting Survey, which includes its public and private recycling amounts and the diversion of its solid waste stream. Baltimore City and other counties request that businesses submit recycling reports to them so that the amounts collected by businesses may be included in each county's official report, though it is not mandatory for businesses to recycle or provide information on their recycling activities..

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Currently, Baltimore City, and other counties, spend staff time and resources to mail out hundreds of letters and e-mails to businesses requesting them to report their recycling activity for the year. Unfortunately, there is a low response rate to those requests. The City can only report the information it has, so when we do not receive reports from businesses, their recycling activity is not counted in the official recycling rate. It is anticipated that required reporting would result in more accurate data gathered in the counties and would increase the recycling rates. This would also help track decreases in participation, informing where additional recycling information could reinforce the need for good recycling habits, further increasing rates.

Montgomery County passed legislation in 1993 to require businesses in its jurisdiction to recycle and to submit recycling reports while Prince George's County passed similar legislation in 2012 including recycling and reporting in multi-family dwellings. Both of these counties consistently have among the highest recycling rates in the State.

Compared with most other counties in Maryland, Baltimore City has many multi-family dwellings, office buildings, universities, hospitals, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Receiving recycling rates from these entities would greatly assist the City with providing accurate recycling reporting to the State.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 988.