



HB69 – Environment - Single-Use Plastics - Restrictions

Testimony before House Economic Matters Committee

February 17, 2021

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Madame Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in support of HB69, to reduce the amount of disposable, single-use plastics in our communities. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members).

Our planetary home is in crisis. A crisis that is literally getting us buried in throwaway plastic. According to a study by the journal Science and associated research at the University of California, more than 4.8 million metric tons of plastic waste enters our oceans each year. Recycling of single-use plastic is technologically limited and impractical, resulting in less than 10% rate of recycling. The plastic that does end up in our oceans persists for 100's of years, and kills an incalculable amount of marine animals each year. Despite all of this, ***the fossil fuel industry has responded with misinformation and aggressive growth goals, aiming to actually increase the amount of throwaway plastic that consumers use each year.***

HB69 moves our state in a new direction – eliminating many of the routine uses of single-use plastics in our food service industry. This in turn will spawn a new generation of small (and large) business innovation and invention, as companies have already started to roll out bio-degradable or compostable alternatives. **HB69** would join Maryland to a growing roster of states, cities and countries that have set a course towards eliminating single-use plastic. These include Canada, Australia, France, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Kenya, as well as Seattle, Montreal and New Delhi. It is critical for the future health of our planet, that we move forward with this and other similar efforts to reduce single-use plastics.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Richard Deutschmann
Columbia, MD