



Committee: Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Testimony on: SB483 - “Solid Waste Management--Organics Waste Management and Waste Diversion--Food Residuals”
Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing
Person
Submitting: Diana Younts, co-chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 10, 2021

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB483. We urge you to vote favorably for SB483. The bill will serve to reduce methane and other greenhouse gasses and toxic pollutants emitted by landfills, incinerators, and agriculture; reduce run off to our waterways and the Chesapeake Bay; rebuild healthy soils; create jobs; and promote donations to food pantries.

Food Donations: SB483 allows food donation as a waste reduction strategy. When similar legislation passed in Vermont, **food donation increased by at least 30%**, taking usable food and getting it into the hands of food banks and hungry people.

More than 25% food supply wasted: 25% of the overall food supply at the retail and consumer level going uneaten and wasted. Large generators, those that produce more than one ton per week of food waste, produce more than half of Maryland’s organic waste. According to the EPA, food scraps and food waste are the largest portion of waste sent by municipalities to landfills and incinerators, accounting for as much as 24 % of waste.

Reduces greenhouse gas emissions: Diversion of food waste from landfills and incinerators will reduce landfill methane emissions and the toxic emissions from incinerators. Landfills account for 17% of Maryland’s methane emissions, a greenhouse gas that is 86 times more potent than CO2 in its first 20 years after emission.

Builds Healthy Soils & Reduces Runoff: Food waste is an excellent source of material for making compost and adding compost to our soils results in building healthy soils. Healthy soils and the plants that grow in them, hold and sequester carbon in the ground., are rich in microbes, high in organic matter, are stable, and retain water.

We need sustainable, long term solutions to managing our organic waste and supporting the growth of composting is a win-win strategy.

For these reasons we urge to vote favorably for SB483.

Submitted by:

MLC Climate Justice Wing:

Maryland Legislative Coalition
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
WISE
Frack Free Frostburg
Mountain Maryland Movement
Clean Water Action
Maryland Sierra Club
Howard County Indivisible
Howard County Sierra Club
Columbia Association Climate change and sustainability advisory committee
HoCo Climate Action
CHEER
Climate XChange - Maryland
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/
National Parks Conservation Association
350 Montgomery County
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
Audubon Naturalist Society
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Environmental Justice Ministry
Coalition For Smarter Growth
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign
MoCo DCC
Potomac Conservancy
Casa de Maryland
Nuclear Information & Resource Service

Clean Air Prince Georges
Ji'Aire's Workgroup
Laurel Resist
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial Cafos
Wicomico NAACP
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Chispa MD
Climate Law & Policy Project
Poor Peoples Campaign
Labor for Sustainability
The Nature Conservancy
Clean Air Prince Georges
350 Baltimore
Maryland Environmental Health Network