



# Howard County Council

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3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Christiana Rigby  
Councilmember

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District 3

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB0314

Plastic Bag Reduction Act

January 26, 2021

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing today to express my **support for HB0314**, the Plastic Bag Reduction Act introduced by Delegate Lierman and Senator Augustine. This bill would ban the distribution of disposable plastic bags by retail establishments at the point of sale.

According to the National Resources Defense Council, the average family in the United States uses roughly 1,500 plastic bags every year, yet very few of these bags end up being successfully recycled. This amounts to millions of plastic bags used annually in Howard County alone, many of which end up in our streams, forests, and natural environment.

In 2019, I successfully sponsored local legislation with Councilman Opel Jones to implement a 5-cent fee on disposable plastic bags in Howard County. This bill was the first step of our broader local effort to curb plastic pollution in our community. However, more can and should be done at the state level to reduce plastic bag production and pollution, which HB0314 seeks to address.

As you review this legislation, I respectfully request that you consider an amendment to HB0314 to implement a small fee on non-plastic disposable bags. This measure would reduce the distribution of other disposable bags, encourage consumers to switch to reusable bags, and generate funding for environmental education and cleanup efforts throughout our state.

As you consider opportunities to address the rampant overuse of single-use plastics in the state of Maryland, the Plastic Bag Reduction Act will move our state toward a cleaner, more sustainable future. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Christiana Rigby  
Howard County Councilmember, District 3