

**TESTIMONY TO THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION**

**HB0248: Condominiums and Homeowners Associations - Rights and Restrictions -
Composting**

Position: Support

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Brenda Platt

Director, Composting for Community Initiative

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

bplatt@ilsr.org

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. I support HB0248: Condominiums and Homeowners Associations - Rights and Restrictions - Composting.

My name is Brenda Platt and I lead the composting initiative at the national nonprofit, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR).

Composting and compost use have many benefits: job creation, healthy soils, climate protection, food security, garbage reduction. Supporting the ability of homeowners to compost on their own property or to set out segregated organic materials like kitchen scraps for collection service providers to recycle offsite is important and puts composting on a more level playing field with trash disposal. Whereas trash generated ends up in polluting landfills or incinerators, food scraps and other organic materials that are composted enhance soils, create many more jobs, and protect the climate. Compost is a valuable soil amendment that provides needed organic matter. Indeed, the Maryland Healthy Soils Program is promoting the widespread use of healthy soils practices among farmers in Maryland. Increasing soil organic matter is specifically named, along with the ability of soil to sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In the Institute for Local Self-Reliance's report, [*Yes! In My Backyard: A Home Composting for Local Government*](#), we included a whole chapter on the importance of fixing archaic laws called "Ordinances: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly." Today we're seeing state and local government enact laws to pro-actively support environmental practices like composting. The District of Columbia, for instance, passed a Home Composting Incentives Act, which took care of archaic language and clarified that home composting was permitted. HB0248 when passed will be another important piece of legislation clarifying that condominium and homeowners associations cannot restrict or prohibit property owners from composting at-home or contracting with private entities to do the composting for them.

By preventing restrictions on composting, HB0248 will support Maryland jobs and healthy soils. The graph on next page compares jobs via composting with jobs via landfilling and incineration. Maryland is lucky in having many food scrap collection service providers (Compost Cab, Veterans Compost, Waste Neutral, Compost Crew, to name a few). Unlike their waste hauling counterparts, which tend to be national conglomerates and even corporate monopolies (see ILSR's recent report, [*How Waste Monopolies*](#)

are Choking Environmental Solutions, and What We Can Do About It), these local private entities are creating Maryland jobs and cycling Maryland discarded materials into a beneficial resource.

Thank you for taking action on this. I urge you to pass this bill.

