



January 28, 2021

House Bill 0314
Plastic Bag Reduction Act
Committee: Environment and Transportation

Position: FAVORABLE

This bill provides a solution to financial and environmental burdens related to the circulation of single-use plastic bags in Anne Arundel County. The bill also provides the industry, counties and consumers reasonable time to phase out thin-film, single-use plastic bags, and places no additional cost burden on consumers.

The continued proliferation of thin-film, single-use plastic bags has a financial impact to Anne Arundel County taxpayers. In 2019, the County was charged an additional \$360,000 by our recycling contractor for placing non-recyclable materials in recycling bins. Much of this non-recyclable material was thin-film plastic, such as that used for single-use plastic bags. The plastic bags can clog recycling machinery, become shredded, and “contaminate” the entire load of recyclables. When such contamination occurs, the entire load of recyclables is diverted to a landfill.

From 2016 through 2019, the County spent approximately \$100,000 on outreach efforts to educate citizens that plastic bags and other non-recyclable materials should not be placed into recycling bins. Additionally, the County spent almost \$200,000 cleaning up litter in 2019, much of which consisted of single-use plastic bags.

Anne Arundel County expects these taxpayer-funded costs will be reduced by removing one of the most problematic materials from circulation: single-use plastic bags.

For these reasons, the Anne Arundel County Administration requests a FAVORABLE vote on HB 0314.