



February 5, 2021

The Honorable Delegate Kumar P. Barve
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **HB 0314** – Plastic Bag Reduction Act – **Oppose**

Dear Delegate Barve:

HB 0314 would prohibit food service facilities from distributing plastic carryout bags effective July 1, 2022.

While the assumed intentions of this bill are laudable, the exceptions listed in the bill render that benefit nearly meaningless. In addition, the potential consequences do not appear to have been considered. For instance:

- Studies have shown that each alternate material for such bags would have to be reused a certain number of times (as much as 30 to 40 times) to negate the pollution of production and to equal that of a plastic bag that has only been used *one* time.
- Biodegradable containers for takeout and delivery cost up to three times more than plastic.
- In another study, University of Arizona and Loma Linda University in California discovered the presence of coliform bacteria in 51% of the 84 reusable grocery bags tested, with E. coli present in 8%. Single use plastic bags do not carry this risk.

While this ban would go into effect on July 1, 2022, affected businesses will still be recovering from the devastating effects of the pandemic. Saddling them with further costs, in return for very little benefit to either the environment or consumers, is ill-advised at this time.

Therefore, the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 600 members, opposes this bill. We therefore request that you give it an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike McMullin'.

Mike McMullin
President
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Delegate Haven Shoemaker
Senator Justin Ready