



TESTIMONY FOR SB0223 PLASTIC BAG REDUCTION ACT

Bill Sponsor: Senator Augustine

Committee: Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0223 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our Coalition members support the reduction, and actually the elimination of plastic bags in our state. In other countries, plastic is not available. Compostable bags are provided in grocery stores and people bring their own reusable bags. Getting rid of plastic bags is an important way to reduce our carbon footprint.

This bill will FINALLY prohibit a store or a retail establishment from distributing plastic carry-out bags to a consumer at point-of-sale. It also sets a penalty for violating the prohibition at \$500 or less.

It allows the state can to enact laws prohibiting, restricting or regulating the use of plastic bags less than 4 millimeters thick and it provides an exception for counties and municipalities that have already set fees for the use of plastic bags over 4mils so they can continue to charge the fees.

This is a giant step forward in reducing our reliance on plastic and becoming better environmental stewards.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.