T E S T I M O N Y

February 25, 2021

Committee: House Environment & Transportation

Bill: HB 1114 – Illegal Dumping and Litter Control Law – Yard Waste

Position: Support

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 1114. This legislation expands the definition of "litter" in the Illegal Dumping and Litter Control Law to include "yard waste." "Yard waste" is organic plant waste derived from gardening, landscaping, and tree trimming activities, including leaves, garden waste, lawn cuttings, weeds, and pruning. A person who illegally disposes of yard waste is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a mandatory minimum fine of $50 and a maximum fine of $300 (first violation) or $1,000 (second or subsequent violation). A court must order a violator to (1) remove or render harmless the illegally disposed yard waste or (2) reimburse the State, county, municipal corporation, or bi-county unit for its removal costs.

The expansion of the definition of litter is helpful as it allows a municipality to better control the illegal dumping of various types of yard waste in areas where such an activity is prohibited. There have been situations where a person or a commercial landscaping company simply dumps their yard waste in a municipal right-of-way rather than disposing of it legally. It also allowed a city or town to recoup the costs of disposing of the yard waste themselves if such activity is warranted.

The League also appreciates that this measure ensures that if a person is ordered to "remove or render harmless the yard waste disposed or in violation of this section" that the yard waste is disposed of in accordance with a local ordinance, if such an ordinance exists. MML thanks the Sponsor's attention to this matter, and respectfully requests a favorable report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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