

Testimony for SB0124

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB0124. I'm writing on behalf of the employees of Compost Crew, a company with over 10 years of experience collecting and composting food scraps. We currently serve thousands of homes, businesses & schools in the state of Maryland. In 2021, we diverted over 7 million pounds of food and organic waste to area compost facilities.

When organizations choose to compost, they do so to help reduce their trash bills, and because they recognize the importance of diverting their food waste from landfills, where it would create methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

Implementing zero waste practices such as composting in schools is especially impactful because it not only serves those aims, it also educates the next generation about the importance of reducing food waste, caring for our planet, and protecting local soils that can reduce food insecurity in their communities.

Our team is proud to work with several schools in Maryland and Virginia to compost their food scraps, including both [Prince George's County \(see video at http://tiny.cc/s9lnuz\)](http://tiny.cc/s9lnuz) and Montgomery County Public Schools. As we work with these teachers, administrators, and students it is clear that composting provides opportunities for students to learn, lead, and make a positive impact.

Although composting in schools is an important step in fighting food waste, mitigating climate change, and instilling crucial values in younger generations, schools that wish to compost do not currently have a dedicated source of funding. Instead, they have to look for grants, get PTA funding, or get creative with alternative options. More often than not, this search for funding is too much for schools to overcome. This bill would remedy this issue and simplify the path for schools across the state to start composting.

We urge the delegates to support SB0124. Providing grant funding to allow more schools to participate in organics recycling makes composting more accessible, reduces the amount of food waste sent to landfills, and helps prepare the next generation as stewards of our planet.