

Maryland-Delaware Solid Waste Association
a chapter of the



TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee
The Maryland Department of the Environment

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: March 23, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 171 – *Environment – Public Participation Modernization Act*

The Maryland Delaware Solid Waste Association (MDSWA), a chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association, is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in the State of Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. MDSWA and its members **support** Senate Bill 171.

Senate Bill 171 proposes to amend general public participation and notice requirements for a number of permits that are issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) including permits to install, materially alter, or materially extend landfill systems, incinerators for public use, or rubble landfills. Under current law, MDE must hold any required public informational meetings and hearings at a location near where the permit or license applies. Senate Bill 171 would authorize these public informational meetings and hearings to be held using teleconference or Internet-based conferencing technology unless federal law requires the meeting or hearing to be held in person or any person requests that the meeting or hearing be held in person.

MDSWA strongly supports the proposed changes to the public notice, public hearings, and informational meetings requirements. The changes are necessary given the changes in federal public notice rules and public health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. MDSWA not only believes that these changes will facilitate the ability for MDE to timely process permit applications even under the limitations of a pandemic, but that conducting hearings and meetings using teleconference or Internet-based conferencing technology will provide increased opportunities for the public to engage in the licensing and permitting process and will likely save time and money for both MDE and applicants. MDSWA urges a favorable report.

For more information call:

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