

January 31, 2022

2022 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
HB0184/SB0229: Environment – On-Farm Composting Facilities – Permit Exemption

COMMITTEE: House Environment and Transportation

POSITION: Testimony of Support of House Bill 0184

BILL ANALYSIS: Establishes a permit exemption for on-farm food waste composting on farm-based facilities where the on-farm composting compromises 40,000 square feet or less.

SIGNED: Maryland Food System Resiliency Council (FRSC)

I submit this written testimony on behalf of our Maryland Food System Resiliency Council (FRSC) members (33 appointed members) – not the government or the Governor’s office - in SUPPORT of HB0184/SB0229. This legislation establishes permit exemption for on-farm composting facility under COMAR 26.04.11.06, if the on-farm compost site of food scraps uses 40,000 square feet of area (or less).

The Food System Resiliency Council was established by the Maryland General Assembly in the 2021 legislative session to bring together 33 appointed council members from across the state, all with different points of entry and expertise to work toward a more resilient food system and address the food insecurity crisis due to COVID-19. One of the key mandates of this council was to develop a report by Nov. 1st 2021, detailing equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of the Maryland food system.

The FSRC report represents five months of intensive work and thought leadership on behalf of organizations, such as the state’s main two food banks, all the state’s food councils, leaders in anti-hunger advocacy, emergency food assistance providers, state administrators, emergency responders, food system experts, and universities.

The proposed permit exemption in HB0184/SB0229 align with the recommendations in the FSRC report, which details the importance of reducing food waste and expanding food scraps composting to build the long-term resilience and sustainability of our local food system. Passing HB0184/SB0229 will strengthen the sustainability of our local food system by encouraging the adoption of on-farm composting facilities, reduce food waste, and enhance the resiliency of our food systems.

Sincerely,



Heather Bruskin

Co-Chair, Maryland Food System Resiliency Council