



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB217 - Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling and Waste Systems in Maryland

Organization: WISE

Submitting: Monica O'Connor, Environment/Climate Legislative Liaison

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 31, 2022

Dear Chairperson Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today. WISE is an all-volunteer women-led group of advocates formed in Anne Arundel County, and has over 600 members. WISE urges you to vote favorably on HB217

We support HB 217. There have been numerous developments in the field of waste management and recycling in recent years – ranging from the decision by China to stop importing materials for recycling to changes in the production of plastics to the economics of recycling for local governments in Maryland to the science of micro-plastics in our waterways.

This is an opportune time for Maryland to review the current status, what is working, what is not and to update the Maryland Recycling Act if needed. The Maryland Recycling Act was enacted over 30 years ago. There have been updates over the years – for batteries, other items containing mercury, composting and other specialty items, but the basic framework is the same. In many respects, it has worked well.

It is time, though, to examine, from a statewide perspective, what the external factors affecting the recycling system are, whether it is possible or necessary to address some of those and to ensure waste management programs are as effective as they can be.

We respectfully urge your favorable consideration.