



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 2, 2022

Committee: House Environment & Transportation

Bill: _____ HB 307 – Environment – Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility

Position: Support with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The goal of this bill is to modernize and improve waste and recycling in Maryland. It shifts the responsibility for packaging materials to the producer, increasing the likelihood that environmentally damaging materials are responsibly disposed of. This bill also includes a fee structure to help local governments with the collection and disposal of these products. These are valuable and necessary measures to further our collective response to climate change.

However, the Maryland Municipal League has several concerns. This bill includes a process by which local governments may request reimbursement from a producer responsibility organization for costs associated with collecting, transporting, and processing packaging materials. This is a model the League supports, but the bill as drafted does not provide the clarity necessary to understand the impact of the legislation on our operations, to include the potential for new practices and the process for securing reimbursements.

For example, “local governments” is undefined in this bill, Subtitle 17, and even Title 9. Without clarification, it’s unclear whether this reimbursement process would be available to municipalities. Furthermore, several municipalities own and operate their own waste processing plants, while others rely on county or even out-of-state processing centers. It is unclear whether those municipalities that collect packaging materials but do not process and dispose of it themselves would still qualify for reimbursement. Assuming the intent of the bill is to include municipalities, how the reimbursement amounts are decided and disbursed is unclear.

The logistical relationship between state, county, and municipal waste collection is detailed and complicated; however, we are confident that further discussion and collaboration can resolve these outstanding questions. We believe this will be a net-positive for the State and our cities and towns, and MML looks forward to working with the Sponsor and this Committee. With adoption of clarifying amendments, MML would respectfully request a favorable report.

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