

Testimony Supporting HB1239
House Environment & Transportation Committee
March 9, 2022

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action strongly supports HB1239 to increase the market for recycled materials in Maryland. Post-consumer recycled content requirements are an important piece of developing economically sustainable recycling markets to ensure that materials that are technologically recyclable actually get recycled, especially in light of the changing recycling markets in the past several years.

Setting minimum standards for post-consumer content in various product sectors creates a market for recycled materials that makes recycling operations more economically viable and expands the opportunities for local facilities to find markets for their products. This has a wide variety of external benefits that support the need for state action. For example, producing new plastic from recycled material [uses only two-thirds](#) of the energy required to manufacture it from raw materials. One ton of recycled plastic [saves](#) 5,774 Kwh of energy, 16.3 barrels of oil, 98 million BTU's of energy, and 30 cubic yards of landfill space. A ton of PET plastic containers made with recycled plastic conserves about 7,200 kilowatt hours. Manufacturing one ton of office and computer paper with recycled paper stock [can save](#) between 3,000 and 4,000 kilowatt hours over the same ton of paper made with virgin wood products. Requiring that products contain a minimum content of recycled materials is an effective way to ensure that more materials are recycled, and fewer virgin materials must be drilled or harvested from the environment, saving energy and the environment.

We support the testimony of the Sierra Club and their recommendations for amendments to the legislation. We also encourage the committee to amend 9–2410 to no longer preempt Maryland counties and municipalities from setting stronger post-consumer recycled content requirements, but explicitly affirm their ability to do so. Local governments should not be barred from setting strong standards for minimum recycled content; so we suggest that this language be amended to language such as:

This subtitle does not affect the authority of a county, municipality, or other local government to enact standards that are at least as stringent as the standards established in this subtitle.

We encourage the committee to pass HB1239 to promote and create new markets for recycled materials, developing the Zero Waste future in Maryland.

Thank you,

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