

HB131_FAV_SafeHealthyPlayingFieldsInc.pdf

Uploaded by: Amanda Farber

Position: FAV

HB 131 - SUPPORT

Amanda Farber
Safe Healthy Playing Fields
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HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody
January 19, 2022
Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Safe Healthy Playing Fields Inc (SHPFI) is a grassroots, non-profit organization based in Montgomery County, MD and includes volunteer partners and advocates across the country. **SHPFI strongly supports HB131**, which would require producers of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of synthetic turf and turf infill to the Maryland Department of the Environment.

This bill is about transparency and best practices; it is neither punitive nor prohibitive.

All artificial turf fields have limited lifespans and require regular replacement at least every 8-10 years. Some organizations and jurisdictions have fields that have required more frequent replacement. Between the large number of artificial turf fields that must be removed every year, the petrochemical based plastic carpet, the shock pad, and the infill component of each field (consisting of silica sand, tire crumb and/or other infills), this represents a massive amount of material which must be managed. In fact, the industry has characterized the amount of material to be handled as “enormous,” and has acknowledged that synthetic turf components have not always been handled or disposed of responsibly. This bill requires a simple, straightforward reporting of the chain of custody of the materials involved.

The Synthetic Turf Council guidelines themselves recommend chain of custody documentation.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.syntheticurfCouncil.org/resource/resmgr/guidelines/STC_Guideline_or_Recycle_Re.pdf

The Synthetic Turf Council (STC), the “world’s largest organization representing the synthetic turf industry,” released their latest version of their *Guideline to Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose and Remove Synthetic Turf Systems* in 2017. The guidelines include recommendations and multiple examples of chain-of-custody, but there is little in the way of required accountability.

The industry has often used vague or greenwashed language with regards to disposal and recycling. For example, just because an item is theoretically “recyclable” does not mean it is practical to do so. In addition, the term “recycling” is often used when in fact companies are referring to “reusing” or “repurposing.” We do know there are currently no complete circular synthetic turf recycling facilities in the United States at this time. Synthetic turf can be re-used, landfilled, incinerated, dumped, or stockpiled. Again, this is why chain of custody is critical.

Basic reporting is an opportunity for the industry to be good stewards of their product and the environment.

https://football-technology.fifa.com/media/1230/artificial_turf_recycling.pdf

FIFA, the international governing body for football (soccer) commissioned an Environmental Impact Study of Artificial Football Turf dated March 2017.

The report raises the issue of disposal cost and transparency, stating, “there may be a significant issue with the illegal dumping of waste pitches and this issue will only worsen as an increasing number of pitches will need to be disposed of in the coming years.” The report also warns, “IMPORTANT! Always ask for proof of where the turf is being sent. Illegal dumping is the worst possible end for your pitch!”

A number of news outlets have recently covered the growing issues surrounding the end-of-life disposal of artificial turf - and need for additional transparency and accountability:

- The Atlantic - *Fields of Waste: Artificial Turf Is Piling Up With No Recycling Fix*; December 19, 2019 <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/12/artificial-turf-fields-are-piling-no-recycling-fix/603874/>
- York Daily Record / USA Today - *Worn Out Artificial Turf Fields Pose Huge Waste Problem Across Nation*; November 18, 2019 <https://www.ydr.com/in-depth/news/2019/11/18/old-artificial-turf-fields-pose-huge-waste-problem-environmental-concerns-across-nation/2314353001/>
- Seattle Times - *Feds Order Owner of Dam on Puyallup River to Clean Up Spill From Artificial Turf*; September 3, 2020 <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/feds-order-owner-of-dam-on-puyallup-river-to-clean-up-spill-from-artificial-turf/>
- Zembla - *The Artificial Turf Mountain*; September 20, 2018 <https://www.bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen/the-artificial-turf-mountain>
- Maryland Matters – *Legislation Seeks More Environmental Friendly Turf Removal*; February 20, 2020 <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2020/02/20/proposed-legislation-could-see-more-environmentally-friendly-turf-removal/>

It should not be difficult for stakeholders to obtain basic verifiable information regarding chain of custody of synthetic turf material and turf infill – but it is. HB131 will help ensure greater accountability in the handling of the material without an undue burden on the industry.

Thank you,
Amanda Farber

Safe Healthy Playing Fields Inc

2022_HB-0131_testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Andrew Hinz

Position: FAV

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB131. I urge you to vote favorably on HB131. Transparency and accountability is required in disposal of this significant solid waste that will adversely affect our waterways and groundwater when not disposed of appropriately. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent.

This is common-sense, good government. The cost of trying to remediate the harm from just one improperly handled field is more than the minimal cost of compliance and oversight. We amplify the effectiveness of our Maryland Department of the Environment when we supplement their policing with

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand). According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be landfilled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County. Another field (Walter Johnson HS) was reportedly shipped to an uncertain fate halfway around the world in Malaysia.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf, which involves separating the plastic grass and backing from the sand and rubber infill is complicated and has not been fully developed, so when a synthetic turf owner wants to do the right thing and tries to recycle, they have limited options. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent and customers will want to do the right thing.

Our environment, waterways and municipalities suffer from inappropriate disposal of the plastic carpeting and infill from synthetic turf. Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

We support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

MNCPPC Position Statement HB 131 Environment - Syn

Uploaded by: Caleen Kufera

Position: FAV

POSITION STATEMENT

Bill: HB 131 – Environment - Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill - Chain of Custody

Position: SUPPORT **Date:** January 17, 2022

Contact: Mike Riley, Director, Montgomery County Parks Department
Bill Tyler, Director, Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation

What The Bill Does: This bill would enable the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to collect reliable information about the lifecycle of synthetic turf or turf infill materials in the state by requiring owners to report when and how they recycle or dispose of those materials.

Why We Support: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“Commission”) is responsible for managing 10 existing synthetic turf fields serving the everyday needs of thousands of active families in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties. In this context, the managers of our park and recreation operations anticipate an ongoing process of adding new fields and restoring old ones to keep up with a growing community demand.

At the same time, our agency leaders recognize competing community concerns exist about the long-term environmental impact when synthetic materials enter the disposal or recycling streams. As an agency founded in part to pursue environmental stewardship, the Commission supports responsible reuse and disposal of turf materials with a focus on ensuring recycling. This legislation would establish transparency and public accountability by mandating disclosure to MDE, coupled with appropriate fines for field owners who fail to disclose their disposal activities.

Our team plans to achieve compliance by modifying our current procurement process to require the necessary information regarding disposal practices and reporting required by this bill.

The Commission fully supports this bill and urges a favorable report.

#

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HB0131_Synthetic_Turf_MLC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0857
ENVIRONMENT – SYNTHETIC TURF AND TURF INFILL – CHAIN OF CUSTODY AND REUSE

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Lehman

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0857 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Synthetic turf is an often-overlooked source of toxicity. It contains toxic metals, such as cadmium, lead and arsenic, in addition to phthalates, which may negatively affect some organs, including reproductive organs. Various substances, including old tires and silica sand, are used to make artificial grass so levels of toxins in artificial turf differ from one manufacturer to the next manufacturer.

Additionally, synthetic turf can negatively affect the environment in many ways. Hosing down artificial turf creates runoff, transferring its elements, such as chromium, to the ground and water supply. When it's time to dispose of artificial turf, it can take decades to break down fully in a landfill. Habitat erosion is another side effect of artificial grass because it does not provide a home or food for insects, birds and other animals.

In Maryland, synthetic turf is not regulated in any way. Often, it is thrown out when it is no longer useful and it sits in landfills. We don't even have information about how much synthetic turf is in Maryland and how it is being disposed of. This bill would seek to manage and report on the chain of custody from the manufacturer, then the supplier, to the end-user, and finally through disposal. This information is necessary to understand exactly how much synthetic turf is in use and how it is disposed of.

The bill does not require any approval from the government – just reporting on the change in custody and is designed to provide transparency around the process. This reporting process helps both the buyer and the seller. It allows the seller to use their compliance and transparency as a selling point for the proper handling of the turf, and it allows the buyer to know that their purchase won't wind up being improperly dumped. It also will prevent improper disposal of a significant quantity of plastic, which Maryland needs to ensure is not being cavalierly dumped in landfills. If we cannot take this small step to

try to get a handle on the deluge of plastic pollution in Maryland, we will have no hope for ever getting out of this fossil fuel crisis.

Our members see this as a required first step to understand how this toxic substance is being handled and we feel that everyone involved in the chain of custody should be supportive of this requirement for themselves and the good of all Marylanders. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

Final WDC testimony HB0131, chain of custody, uplo

Uploaded by: Diana Conway

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

House Bill HB0131
Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody
House Environment and Transportation Committee – January 19, 2022
SUPPORT

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

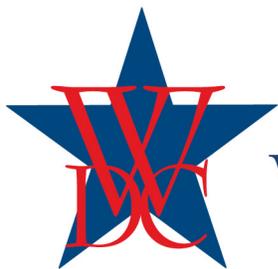
Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC is in full support of HB131, requiring a chain of custody for synthetic turf fields and infill in Maryland. This bill is a common-sense solution to an increasingly urgent problem, namely the responsible management of the materials in synthetic turf fields and infill. The sole requirement of the bill is for the producer of a plastic field, as defined in the bill, to alert the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) whenever the field is moved. MDE then posts the information. Nothing further is required unless the field is moved again, at which point the same reporting and posting is to take place.

This bill is about **transparency**; it is **not punitive** in intent or effect, to responsible producers of synthetic turf fields. The enactment of HB131 will create a simple but effective tool for verifying that used synthetic turf fields are not improperly disposed of upon being moved.

There is nothing new or remarkable about legislation geared to protect public health, and our shared environment. There is nothing new or remarkable about a reporting requirement on a product. In the case of synthetic fields, there are three aspects that clearly fall within the public health/environmental protection values:

- **Toxicity:** We have known for decades that many components of synthetic turf fields are toxic – in both the carpet and infill: heavy metals, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, PFAS (“forever chemicals”) and more. In addition to being toxic individually, these are present in largely unstudied and undisclosed combinations.
- **Microplastics:** The alarming rate of microplastic pollution globally puts a premium on prevention versus clean-up. By preventing improper disposal of synthetic turf carpet and infill, HB131 helps curb the microplastic load to which we and our environment are exposed.
- **Volume:** A single plastic field with infill amounts to some 250+ tons of mixed plastics and other materials. The industry puts the ‘useful’ life of a field at 8-10 years. Since the original AstroDome field in 1966, there have been tens of thousands of synturfs installed in the U.S., then removed, and then replaced (The cost of returning to a grass field after a synturf is prohibitive for all but professional/elite venues). Where have they gone? It is a question that deserves an answer, at least going forward.



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It is the responsibility of our government to secure the health and welfare of Marylanders. Weighed against a simple reporting requirement, public health and environmental protection must prevail. HB131 protects Marylanders from irresponsible behavior related to movement of these fields.

In addition, the responsible producers can proudly tell their customers that they comply with the standards for transparency and accountability at each step of a field's life. Such claims are a positive selling point in today's market. It also assures buyers they won't be embarrassed when a dumped field is traced to their school, park, etc.

Accordingly, we ask for your favorable vote to guide the synthetic turf industry to responsible management of their products.

We urge a favorable report for HB131.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President

HB131-Synthetic Turf Chain of Custody-E&T-CJW-FAV

Uploaded by: Diana Younts

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody

Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing

Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB131. The MLC Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB131.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand). According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be landfilled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf is not commercially available anywhere in

the United States. The result is over 60 years worth of used synthetic turf fields piled up, and growing. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131.

Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

HB131-TPMEC-Synthetic Turf Chain of Custody-E&T-AV

Uploaded by: Diana Younts

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody

Organization: Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee

Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB131. Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee advocates for climate legislation at the state and local level. We urge you to vote favorably on HB131.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand). According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be landfilled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf is not commercially available anywhere in the United States. The result is over 60 years worth of used synthetic turf fields piled up,

and growing. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131.

Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

HB131_FAV_National Center for Health Research .pdf

Uploaded by: Diana Zuckerman

Position: FAV



NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

The Voice For Prevention, Treatment And Policy

HB 131 - SUPPORT

Dr. Diana Zuckerman

National Center for Health Research

dz@center4research.org; 301 652-0674

HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody

January 19, 2022

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing in enthusiastic support of HB 131 on behalf of the National Center for Health Research, as the president of the Center and as a long-time resident of Maryland. The National Center for Health Research is a nonprofit think tank that conducts, scrutinizes, and explains research with important public health implications for adults and children. We are nationally respected as a source of unbiased information and do not accept funding from entities with a financial interest in our work.

HB 131 is an important bill to the public health of Maryland residents because it would require transparency regarding synthetic turf and turf infill. By enabling the public to be informed about the chain of custody from the time of installation; use; possible reuse; recycling; and disposal, the bill would ensure that individuals, policy makers, and communities would be able to make informed decisions that are essential to the health of adults and children in Maryland. The National Center for Health Research is not an environmental organization, but we are very knowledgeable about the scientific issues pertaining to synthetic turf and infill and how inappropriate disposal of those products can affect the health of Maryland residents.

We urge the immediate passage of this bill, because the lack of transparency regarding the chain of custody of synthetic turf and infill has made it impossible for families, communities, and government officials to make informed decisions that affect the health of adults and children. I speak from experience on this matter: The use of synthetic turf became popular while my children played soccer while growing up in Maryland, and like most parents I was unaware of the environmental or health issues involved. As I became knowledgeable in the last decade, I've been shocked at the widespread misinformation regarding the disposal of these materials.

As the legislators representing our families, you can improve transparency and help communities, families, and government officials determine how synthetic turf and infill are being used and what happens to those products when they are removed. We strongly urge your favorable report on HB 131.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Diana Zuckerman
President

HB131 2022 Favorable Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: J. Stephen Cleghorn

Position: FAV

Committee: Environment & Transportation
Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Delegates:

As a member of a groups of Maryland Catholics advocating for care of our common home, please allow me to register a “FAVORABLE” on *HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody*, a bill requiring the tracking of uses and disposal of synthetic turf.

To understand the industry position, I read the 2021 testimony from Dan Bond of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), which was unfavorable to a similar bill last year (HB857). I expect the STC testimony will be pretty much repeated this year.

There was a lot of verbiage about all the great benefits of synthetic turf, but STC’s testimony left me with this simple question that I would like our legislators to ask STC about HB131.

If STC and all the users of synthetic turf know so much about the uses, re-uses and disposal of their product, then what is the big deal about creating a paper trail on that? How costly could that be? That is not a burdensome regulation and the STC should welcome it to verify their responsible handling of their product all along the chain of custody.

HB 131 Synthetic turf.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Jared Schablein

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR HB 131

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Lehman

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Sam Harvey

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB 131 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive Movement.

Caucus members listen for concerns voiced by their environmental partners, and strive to keep a watchful eye out for environmental risks that might exist in the Maryland communities – especially when residents could be unaware that those risks might lie right underneath their children’s feet.

Synthetic turf, and the various materials that are used for synthetic turf infill, have for some years been a source of concern for parents of young athletes, and athletes themselves, who play on synthetic fields.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Toxicology Program, has focused on Tire Crumb Rubber infill in particular. A 2015 study did identify certain potentially dangerous chemicals used in tire manufacture, which can leach out under high temperatures. These include polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and zinc oxide, which can contain traces of heavy metals (lead, cadmium oxide).

Other testing has show the presence of highly fluorinated chemicals – Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) – in both the grass-like blades and backing of synthetic turf. PFAS break down slowly, and have been known to concentrate in humans, animals, and the environment.

According to the EPA, the human health effects of this build-up of PFAS needs more study, especially to consider the effects of low levels of exposure. However, high levels of exposure are clearly harmful in many ways. Similarly, the National Toxicology Program’s study didn’t find an increased health concern associated with the Tire Crumb Rubber chemicals (which can puff up into the air and be inhaled) – but found that risk assessment of exposure to PAHs is still needed.

HB 131 would create a chain of custody – a way to track synthetic turf and infill from its manufacture, through its use on the play fields, unto its disposal at the end of its effective life. This chain of custody

would need to be documented with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), or producers would incur a warning, and then monetary fines for continued failure to provide that documentation.

Producers of synthetic fields already in place, and installed for the remainder of 2022, would have some leeway in this documentation, as far as where these products ended up, or their final disposal. However, starting January 1, 2023, producers would need to have a system in place to track these materials through their entire lifespans.

Given the fact that we are still studying these play field materials, and have not definitively ruled out associated negative health effects, it seems only prudent to track synthetic turf and infill until we have those answers. For this reason, the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

WDC Testimony HB0131-2022_FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: JoAnne Koravos

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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House Bill HB0131
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Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

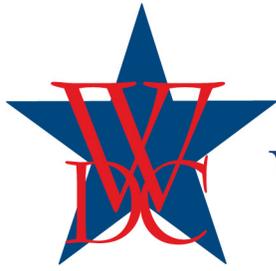
Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC is in full support of HB131, requiring a chain of custody for synthetic turf fields and infill in Maryland. This bill is a common-sense solution to an increasingly urgent problem, namely the responsible management of the materials in synthetic turf fields and infill. The sole requirement of the bill is for the producer of a plastic field, as defined in the bill, to alert the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) whenever the field is moved. MDE then posts the information. Nothing further is required unless the field is moved again, at which point the same reporting and posting is to take place.

This bill is about **transparency**; it is **not punitive** in intent or effect, to responsible producers of synthetic turf fields. The enactment of HB131 will create a simple but effective tool for verifying that used synthetic turf fields are not improperly disposed of upon being moved.

There is nothing new or remarkable about legislation geared to protect public health, and our shared environment. There is nothing new or remarkable about a reporting requirement on a product. In the case of synthetic fields, there are three aspects that clearly fall within the public health/environmental protection values:

- **Toxicity:** We have known for decades that many components of synthetic turf fields are toxic – in both the carpet and infill: heavy metals, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, PFAS (“forever chemicals”) and more. In addition to being toxic individually, these are present in largely unstudied and undisclosed combinations.
- **Microplastics:** The alarming rate of microplastic pollution globally puts a premium on prevention versus clean-up. By preventing improper disposal of synthetic turf carpet and infill, HB131 helps curb the microplastic load to which we and our environment are exposed.
- **Volume:** A single plastic field with infill amounts to some 250+ tons of mixed plastics and other materials. The industry puts the ‘useful’ life of a field at 8-10 years. Since the original AstroDome field in 1966, there have been tens of thousands of synturfs installed in the U.S., then removed, and then replaced (The cost of returning to a grass field after a synturf is prohibitive for all but professional/elite venues). Where have they gone? It is a question that deserves an answer, at least going forward.



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In addition, the responsible producers can proudly tell their customers that they comply with the standards for transparency and accountability at each step of a field's life. Such claims are a positive selling point in today's market. It also assures buyers they won't be embarrassed when a dumped field is traced to their school, park, etc.

Accordingly, we ask for your favorable vote to guide the synthetic turf industry to responsible management of their products.

We urge a favorable report for HB131.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President

HB 131_MDSierraClub_fav 19Jan2021.pdf

Uploaded by: Josh Tulkin

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 131 “Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody and Reuse”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports HB 131, which addresses a serious waste problem posed by the lack of transparency and accountability for disposal of synthetic turf and turf infill. The bill would require manufacturers to establish a system to track the chain of custody for synthetic turf fields and turf infill sold or distributed in the state and to report information on the disposition of the turf and infill, from installation to removal, reuse, repurposing, recycling, and disposal to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Current owners of synthetic turf fields would be responsible for reporting the same information directly to MDE.

Synthetic turf sport fields, which account for nearly two-thirds of all synthetic turf,¹ have an 8-10 year average lifetime and produce a large volume of waste, much of it toxic. According to the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), an average field is 80,000 square feet, comprised of 40,000 pounds of mixed plastic turf and 400,000 pounds of infill (usually tire waste and silica sand but sometimes other materials). The infill equates in volume to 400 cubic yards, or the equivalent of almost fourteen 30-cubic-yard dumpsters of infill.² The volume of the mixed plastic turf varies, depending on how it is packaged.

Based on an inventory assembled by the Sierra Club, there are at least 347 synthetic turf playing fields in Maryland, located in 18 counties and the City of Baltimore (Exhibit 1, Table). Using the STC parameters, these fields represent 67,216 tons of plastic turf carpet and infill, 24.3 million square feet of plastic turf, and 122,850 cubic yards of infill, likely to be disposed of in the next decade when the fields will be replaced.³ While the industry continues to explore ways of recycling, reusing, or repurposing used synthetic turf, ultimately the turf and its components must be disposed of.

At present, the fate of this enormous and growing amount of plastic waste and infill in Maryland and the country is difficult, if not impossible, to track. There is currently no documentation on the extent of reuse, repurposing, recycling, and ultimately, disposal of this waste. Several Maryland county waste facilities report they do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf.⁴ While some materials may be landfilled, an unknown share of the millions of square feet of removed synthetic turf ends up in rural and urban stockpiles or dumped in the environment, sometimes in sensitive ecosystems or vulnerable

¹ Synthetic Turf Council (STC) website: https://www.syntheticurfCouncil.org/page/About_Synthetic_Turf

²STC. 2017. *A Guideline to Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose, and Remove Synthetic Turf Systems*, p.3. https://qhi7a3oj76cn9awl3qcqrh3o-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CR-STC_Guideline_for_Recycle_Re.pdf

³According to the STC, there are currently 12,000-13,000 synthetic turf sports fields in the United States, and 1,200-1,500 are installed annually. The number deconstructed annually in the United States increased from 365 in 2013 to 750 in 2018. Assuming that the number of fields deconstructed annually has risen to at least 1,000 by 2020, this represents 80 million square feet of plastic turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill per year. Disposal of the existing 12,000-13,000 sports fields nationwide amounts to as much as 260,000 tons of turf and 2.6 million tons of infill over the next decade. STC 2017, *op.cit.*

⁴For example, Prince George’s County would not accept synthetic turf fields at its landfill, and they are not accepted for incineration or recycling in Montgomery County. If deposited at the Montgomery County transfer station, synthetic turf would be sent to a landfill in Virginia and charged a \$70/ton tipping fee. For an average sports field, this would amount to more than \$15,000 for disposal, not including the transport costs.

communities.^{5,6,7} For example, hundreds of tons of worn-out carpet and granulated tire waste from Montgomery County high schools ended up in landfills in rural Virginia, on Bird Creek in Baltimore County, and in Malaysia (Exhibit 2).⁸ Synthetic turf from the University of Virginia was dumped illegally on the side of a mountain.⁹ As of last year, there was only one licensed recycling plant for end-of-life synthetic turf – in Europe.¹⁰

Owners of properties where these plastic carpets are dumped are left to clean up the environmental and physical mess. They face clean-up costs and potential liabilities from the aquatic and human toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, heavy metal neurotoxins, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS “forever chemicals” in the synthetic materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems.¹¹ The direct toxic effects of tire particles have been demonstrated in aquatic organisms in particular.¹²

The STC already recommends maintaining a chain of custody for reuse, repurposing, recycling, and removal of synthetic turf fields,¹³ but accountability requires that the public be informed. HB 131’s required reporting to MDE of the chain of custody for synthetic turf and infill will document the number of installations in Maryland; the extent to which synthetic turf and infill is actually reused, repurposed, or recycled; and how and where it is disposed. It will incentivize recycling and proper disposal and provide accountability for improper disposal. Based on our inventory of synthetic turf fields in Maryland, the sponsor may want to consider removing the exemption of fields less than 15,000 feet for indoor venues with smaller fields that collectively sum to 15,000 sf or more (Exhibit 1, Table 1B).

With HB131, Maryland can be a leader in addressing the waste problem posed by synthetic turf. It will hold those responsible for the materials accountable for proper disposal through a publicly documented chain of custody. We respectfully request a favorable report.

Martha Ainsworth
Chair, Chapter Zero Waste Team
Martha.Ainsworth@mdsierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Inventory of synthetic turf playing fields in Maryland

Exhibit 2 – Synthetic turf disposal from Richard Montgomery High School on Bird Creek in White Marsh

⁵Lundstrom, Marjorie, and Eli Wolfe. 2019. “Fields of Waste: Artificial Turf, Touted as Recycling Fix for Millions of Scrap Tires, Becomes Mounting Disposal Mess,” *FairWarning*. December 19. <https://www.fairwarning.org/2019/12/fields-of-waste-artificial-turf-mess/> Reprinted in *The Atlantic* (12/2019), *Salon* (12/21/2019), and *Maryland Matters* (12/20/2019).

⁶Meyer, Pete. 2019. “Hidden gotcha in artificial turf installation.” *Environmental Health News*, Dec. 4. <https://www.ehn.org/hidden-gotcha-in-artificial-turf-installations-2641507579.html>. Woodall, Candy. 2019. “‘Running out of room’: How old turf fields raise potential environmental, health concerns,” *York Daily Record* (Pennsylvania), November 18.

⁷*The Turf Mountain*, video by Zembla, an investigative TV program on BNNVARA, Dutch Public Television. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5o3J7uy4Tk>

⁸ Lundstrom and Wolfe. *op.cit.*

⁹ Meyer, *op. cit.*

¹⁰The Re-Match company, in Denmark. Sources: Woodall, *op.cit.*; *The Turf Mountain*, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Lerner, Sharon. 2019. “Toxic PFAS Chemicals Found in Artificial Turf,” *The Intercept*. October 8. <https://theintercept.com/2019/10/08/pfas-chemicals-artificial-turf-soccer/>

¹²Einhorn, Catrin. 2020. “How Scientists Tracked Down a Mass Killer (of Salmon),” *The New York Times*. December 3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/03/climate/salmon-kill-washington.html>

¹³STC 2017. *op cit.*, pp 13-18.

Exhibit 1: Inventory of synthetic turf fields in Maryland

The Maryland Sierra Club's testimony before the Environment and Transportation Committee on HB857 in 2021 remarked that "The number of synthetic turf fields in Maryland, the number disposed of, and the projected volume of the synthetic turf waste stream by currently installed synthetic turf are unknown."

Over the summer and fall of 2021, Sierra Club volunteers resolved to address that issue by conducting an inventory of synthetic turf fields in the state. This exercise was undertaken to document the number of fields in the state, enable estimation of the amount of waste that will be generated when the fields are retired, and demonstrate the degree of difficulty of obtaining the information.

Methodology

The following information was sought on each synthetic turf playing field currently in place in all 23 counties and the City of Baltimore, including both indoor and outdoor fields:

- Name of the field and address
- Sport played
- Ownership of the field (public schools and universities, public parks, private schools and universities, private sports venues)
- Year the field was installed
- Area of the field in square feet, or its dimensions
- The source of information

Most of the research was done on the internet, which involved accessing websites for: public schools; private schools; colleges and universities; local and major newspapers; athletic organizations and foundations; county departments for parks and recreation; general contractors; and turf installers.¹⁴

These sources were sufficient to identify most fields or venues with fields, however discovering the year each field was installed and its dimensions usually required follow-up with phone calls and emails. When the dimensions for outdoor fields were not available from a reliable source, the team used GoogleEarth's tool to measure the area of the field. Fields were located using the address and are easily distinguishable from natural turf fields. However, the GoogleEarth photos are from 2017, so this method could not be used for fields installed in more recent years. Furthermore, that method could not be used to estimate the dimensions of indoor fields, which are mostly at private sports venues. The dimensions of indoor fields were not easily obtained. Many calls and emails were sent, but many were not returned.

The research was conducted over about 6 months. As of the date of this testimony, there are still missing data for the 347 fields that were identified. The installation date could not be obtained for 105 fields and area could not be ascertained for 19.¹⁵ Field area was obtained from a reliable source for 150 fields (43%), while for 178 (51%) the area was estimated from GoogleEarth.

To estimate the tonnage of turf and infill, the team used conversion factors from the Synthetic Turf Council's (STC) 2017 publication, *A Guideline to Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose, and Remove Synthetic*

¹⁴ General contractors and turf installers consulted (website, email, or phone) included: AstroTurf; Athletic Consultants, Inc.; BrockUSA; Fields Inc.; FieldTurf; JMT; Keystone Sports Construction; King Sports Construction; Playrite; Shaw Sports Turf; Sprinturf; and US GreenTech.

¹⁵Tonnage and volume could not be calculated for these fields.

Turf Systems. According to this document (p. 3), a typical synthetic turf sports field is about 80,000 square feet (sf) and is comprised of 40,000 lb of turf and 400,000 lb of infill. The volume of infill for a typical sport field would amount to about 400 cubic yards. The formulas used for the calculations are:

Estimation of turf weight: $(\text{Field area} / 80,000) \times 40,000 \text{ lb}$
Estimation of infill weight: $(\text{Field area} / 80,000) \times 400,000 \text{ lb}$
Estimation of infill volume: $(\text{Field area} / 80,000) \times 400 \text{ cubic yards}$

The STC report notes that “The volume of the turf removed from the field depends on how it is collected (rolled, cut up, or shredded) and would be considerable in volume.” However, the total coverage of the plastic turf carpet can be estimated.

Findings

Number and distribution of turf fields

A total of 347 synthetic turf fields have been identified in Maryland (Table 1A). It was not a trivial exercise. Some fields have surely been missed and more are being approved or installed every day.

The enumerated fields are located in 18 counties and the City of Baltimore; to date, none have been identified in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Somerset, or Talbot counties. The counties with the greatest number of synthetic turf fields in the inventory are: Montgomery County (62); Baltimore County (60); Howard County (46); Anne Arundel County (39); Baltimore City (30); Prince George's County (26); Harford County (19); Frederick County (17); and Wicomico County (13). Ten counties had fewer than 10 fields each.

Ownership

More than half of the fields belong to public schools, parks, or universities (61% of the fields, 69% of the tonnage). The remaining fields are at private schools (22% of the fields, 25% of the tonnage) or private clubs (17% of the fields, 6% of the tonnage).

Field size

The 328 playing fields for which size could be estimated ranged from a minimum of 3,375 sf to a maximum of 156,800 sf. Forty-one of the fields were less than 15,000 sf and therefore would be exempted from the chain-of-custody reporting requirements of HB 131. All but one of these smaller fields were located at eleven indoor venues. All but one indoor venue had multiple fields, and some had as many as eight. Most, if not all, of them individually were less than 15,000 sf, but collectively would exceed that threshold (Table 1B). This raises the issue of whether HB 131 should also apply to indoor synthetic turf fields at venues where there are multiple small fields under the same roof that collectively sum to more than 15,000 sf. Under the current bill, the vast majority of indoor synthetic turf playing fields would be exempted from the chain of custody requirements because of their small size, even if they are basically one large field subdivided into smaller playing surfaces.

Tonnage and volume of materials

The tonnage and volume of currently installed synthetic turf fields are a projection of the waste that will be generated from these fields over at least the next decade, during which they must be replaced. According to the 2017 STC document, “Depending on its usage, exposure to intense sunlight, maintenance and other factors, a synthetic turf sports field will last 8-10 years before reaching the end of its useful life.”(p.3).

The 328 fields for which field area were available amount to:

- 67,216 tons of mixed plastic carpet and infill;
- 122,850 cubic yards of infill, the equivalent of 4,095 30-yard containers; and
- 24.3 million square feet (557 acres) of mixed plastic carpet.¹⁶

End of life and disposal

The inventory did not attempt to record fields that have been replaced, or whether any of the components of discarded fields were reused, repurposed, recycled, stockpiled, landfilled, or incinerated. Owners of fields that had been replaced generally are only aware that a contractor removed the fields; they are unlikely to know the destination or processing of the removed materials. In a few cases, when a volunteer asked about the disposal of removed fields, the company declined to provide information.

Conclusions

There are at least 347 synthetic turf fields installed in Maryland. They represent a significant amount of potential waste over the next decade, and more fields are planned. There are limited options for disposal of this waste, much of which cannot be recycled or incinerated, and it would take up significant space in the state’s landfills.

It required considerable effort to establish the existence of these fields, and considerably more effort to obtain basic information like the year of installation and field dimensions, which is still incomplete. *In the absence of a publicly disclosed chain of custody it will be very difficult for the public or state authorities to track the existence of turf fields and their proper disposition at the end of life.* A chain of custody would ensure transparency on the disposition of synthetic turf and infill— whether recycled, reused, repurposed, or disposed of in a landfill – and serve as a strong disincentive for improper disposal.

¹⁶ 557 acres covers an area the equivalent of a circle that is 1.1 miles in diameter (5,558 feet).

Table 1A. Inventory of Synthetic Turf Fields and Estimated Waste in Maryland, December 2021

County	Total Fields	Distribution by ownership				Total Tonnage (carpet & infill)	Area of carpet (square feet)	Volume of infill (cubic yards)
		Public schools	Public parks	Private schools	Private sports venues			
Allegany*	4	3	0	0	1	712.8	259,200	1,296
Anne Arundel	39	22	6	8	3	9,753.5	3,546,723	17,734
Baltimore City*	30	7	6	16	1	5544.3	2,017,444	10,087
Baltimore County*	60	25	12	18	5	11,394.1	4,256,802	21,284
Calvert	1	0	0	1	0	22.8	81,000	405
Carroll	6	1	0	0	5	568.7	206,810	1,034
Cecil*	5	2	3	0	0	548.6	199,500	998
Charles	1	1	0	0	0	264.6	108,924	545
Frederick	17	8	4	3	2	3,407.1	931,117	6,195
Garrett*	2	2	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Harford*	19	11	3	3	2	4,463.4	1,622,704	8,114
Howard	46	13	16	1	16	9,190.4	3,341,964	16,710
Montgomery*	62	16	7	20	19	10,435.2	3,794,606	18,973
Prince George's	26	16	6	4	0	6,864.6	2,496,222	12,481
Queen Anne's	2	2	0	0	0	367.5	133,650	668
St. Mary's	8	1	6	1	0	1,506.9	547,960	2,740
Washington	3	1	0	2	0	683.3	248,479	1,242
Wicomico*	13	4	4	0	5	498.3	181,205	903
Worcester	3	3	0	0	0	790.7	287,515	1,438
TOTAL	347	140	73	77	59	67,215.8	24,261,825	122,850

*The dimensions of 19 fields were not available: Allegany (1); Baltimore City (4); Baltimore County (3); Cecil (3); Garrett (2); Harford (1); Montgomery (2); Wicomico (3). The tonnage, carpet area, and volume of infill could not be estimated for these fields and are not included in the table.

Source: Maryland Sierra Club Chapter, Zero Waste Team.

Table 1B. Indoor sports venues with small fields that collectively exceed 15,000 sf

Venue	County	# Indoor fields	Smallest field (sf)	Largest field (sf)	Total, all fields (sf)
Freestate Sports Arena	Baltimore	3	7,200	14,800	35,600
Goals Baltimore	Baltimore	2	7,200	11,900	19,100
Northeast Regional Recreation Center	Baltimore	2	10,875	12,600	23,475
Carroll Indoor Sports Center	Carroll	3	8,370	16,740	40,410
Soccer Dome	Howard	3	5,400	16,200	36,990
Sofive Columbia	Howard	8	3,375	3,375	27,000
Sofive Rockville	Montgomery	8	5,400	5,400	43,200
Michael & Son Rockville Sports Complex	Montgomery	4	2,400	11,900	36,700
Crown Sports Arena	Wicomico	5	8,100	12,800	51,925
Harry S. Parker Athletic Complex	Wicomico	4	6,800	6,800	27,200

Exhibit2 :
Synthetic Turf from Richard Montgomery High School
sent to a site on Bird Creek in White Marsh, Maryland



Photos courtesy of Susan Loftus and Amanda Farber.

HB131_FAV_Mallek.pdf

Uploaded by: Kate Mallek

Position: FAV

HB 131 - SUPPORT
Kate Mallek
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HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody
January 19, 2022

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I share these comments today in **support** of *HB 131- Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill - Chain of Custody*, Sponsored by Delegate Lehman. I am an environmental and human health advocate who has worked on pollution and water quality issues for twenty years. In the last ten years, I have guided countless athletes, and their parents, in making healthy choices to protect themselves when they must play on synthetic turf.

In 2017, Albemarle County, Virginia, where I live, was polluted by the dumping of **more than 200 tons of discarded synthetic turf fields** from a replacement project completed by the University of Virginia. The discarded synthetic turf was rolled up, driven truckload after truckload into rural Albemarle County by a contractor, and dumped on a hillside.

When regulators first noticed it, the landowner had it moved to another more private site, where it was partially buried. When it was found again a few months later, the landowner was cited, and **the portion of the waste synthetic turf that was recoverable** was taken to a landfill. 199 tons of it.

To be clear, a traditional landfill is NOT an appropriate outcome for contaminated plastic waste and pollutants, but Virginia did not have a better mechanism in place with which to handle this mess.



There was no law in place in Virginia to provide information. Finding this dump was by accident and still many citizens have no idea.

These pictures show bits and pieces that were discovered. Piles of discarded synthetic turf fields are building up on industrial lots, behind businesses, and on country sites away from prying eyes, across the United States.

To those who point to recycling synthetic turf as an option: reusing toxic and carcinogenic substances guarantees additional exposure and damage, kicking the pollution can down the road.



Images courtesy of Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

With HB 131, the State of Maryland has a great opportunity to **serve citizens, communities, and environmental health** by providing **transparent** information about synthetic turf application, transportation, and fate.

Holding producers, installers, owners, and transporters of synthetic turf products properly to account for the full life cycle of these products **places the burden appropriately onto the people who make money from the product**. Extended producer responsibility is the logical way that manufacturing should account to communities in a reasonable society. At a bare minimum, citizens deserve transparent information. And you can discourage, and ultimately prevent, this dumping happening in your community.

Synthetic turf leaches polluting components into our ground and surface water and into the air. Some of these pollutants, like PFAS and other forever chemicals in the plastic grass blades, do not degrade and cannot be easily recovered. **Forever chemicals remain damaging for generations, causing chronic disease, birth defects, and longterm environmental and wildlife damage**. Infills containing heavy metals and various cancer-causing substances easily wash away in heavy rains, with potential to threaten streams, rivers, and drinking water far from their original location.

Maryland can do better. HB 131 will help corporate actors and manufacturers to fulfill their promises to provide more reliable information. HB 131 will help school systems and municipalities to assess and verify that they are choosing upstanding and accountable vendors. HB 131 will help buyers, owners, and decision makers, including elected officials, to avoid improper handling of materials in their districts, which can cause significant embarrassment along with human and environmental consequences.

HB 131 is a good choice for Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration. **Please support HB 131 for transparency and chain of custody for synthetic turf.**

Kate Mallek
Albemarle County, Virginia
kate.mallek@gmail.com

For additional information about our experience in Albemarle County, please see:

Hidden gotcha in artificial turf installations by Pete Myers - Dec 04, 2019
ehn.org/hidden-gotcha-in-artificial-turf-installations-2641507579.html

HB131_FAV_Gargurevich-converted.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathryn Gargurevich

Position: FAV

Committee: Environment & Transportation
Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing my testimony today in support of HB131. I am Kathryn Gargurevich a retired science educator and climate activist who works with various climate groups throughout Montgomery County and the state of Maryland. I urge you to vote favorably on HB131. I support the transparency and accountability in disposal of this significant solid waste that will adversely affect our waterways and groundwater and nearby communities when not disposed of appropriately. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent.

According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand).

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be land filled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County. Another field (Walter Johnson HS) was reportedly shipped to an uncertain fate halfway around the world in Malaysia.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf, which involves separating the plastic grass and backing from the sand and rubber infill is complicated and

has not been fully developed, so when a synthetic turf owner wants to do the right thing and tries to recycle, they have limited options. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent and customers will want to do the right thing.

Our environment, waterways and municipalities suffer from inappropriate disposal of the plastic carpeting and infill from synthetic turf. Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

Very significantly, this is not a punitive bill, it is purely a chain of custody, to discourage/preclude dumping as was done with the Walter Johnson field which is in my neighborhood. The shame of this should be enormous.

I support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Gargurevich

Science Educator and Climate Activist

6806 Bradley Blvd.

Bethesda, MD 20817

HB131_FAV_FriendsofSligoCreek.pdf

Uploaded by: Kit Gage

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody

Organization: Friends of Sligo Creek

Submitting: Kit Gage, Advocacy Chair and past President

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB131. Friends of Sligo Creek representing about 1400 members, most in Montgomery County and some in Prince George's, urges you to vote favorably on HB131. We support transparency and accountability in disposal of this significant solid waste that will adversely affect our waterways and groundwater when not disposed of appropriately. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand). According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

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Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in

Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County. Another field (Walter Johnson HS) was reportedly shipped to an uncertain fate halfway around the world in Malaysia.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf, which involves separating the plastic grass and backing from the sand and rubber infill is complicated and has not been fully developed, so when a synthetic turf owner wants to do the right thing and tries to recycle, they have limited options. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent and customers will want to do the right thing.

Our environment, waterways and municipalities suffer from inappropriate disposal of the plastic carpeting and infill from synthetic turf. Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

Friends of Sligo Creek, or FOSC, is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to protecting, improving, and appreciating the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

Kit Gage
Chair, Advocacy Committee, advocacy@fosc.org
Friends of Sligo Creek, www.friendsofsligocreek.org
PO Box 11572
Takoma Park MD 20913

HB131_FAV_ZeroWasteMontgomeryCoalition.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Greenberger

Position: FAV

HB 131 - SUPPORT
Lauren Greenberger
Zero Waste Montgomery Coalition
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HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody
January 19, 2022

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 131. I represent the Zero Waste Montgomery Coalition, a citizens' group of Montgomery County dedicated to helping the County find every strategy possible to reduce our waste and find the most environmentally safe, and economically viable solutions for the disposal of whatever waste we are not able to reuse, repurpose or recycle. After an in-depth analysis of the County's existing systems and financial records we recently produced a report at the request of the County Executive that shows a viable path to dramatically reducing our waste following strict environmental and social justice criteria and within a budget well below what we are currently spending for waste disposal.

The passage of this bill is integral to what we all hold dear and are working hard to achieve for our county and the state of Maryland. We cannot eliminate overnight the production and use of materials that have proven to be problematic for our environment and our long-term health. There is a myriad of these from the plastics we use in every aspect of our life to the batteries in our equipment and even the solar panels we are eagerly installing on our rooftops in an effort to slow the effects of CO2 emissions in our environment. What we can do, however is start down the path of responsibly managing these materials that we use in our day-to-day life. Synthetic turf fields are perfect example of this. We aren't going to eliminate them anytime soon, but this bill will assure that they are managed and disposed of responsibly in the best way our current technology allows us to do. This is an eminently reasonable piece of legislation. It does not put burden on our communities or on the industry beyond what is appropriate. Given the devastating toxicity of inappropriate disposal of used synthetic turf fields, we must ensure that there is a clear and transparent chain of custody for the materials that compose these fields.

We at Zero Waste to Montgomery are realistic enough to know that we cannot actually get to zero waste overnight. We can, however, do everything in our power to minimize the harmful effects of the products we produce and use throughout their lifespan. This is what the results of our report show, and it is the basis for which Montgomery County will move forward with its solid waste management strategy. HB 131 aligns perfectly with this plan of action.

Without reservation, we wholeheartedly support a favorable report on HB131.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Greenberger
The Zero Waste Montgomery Coalition

Turf Chain of Custody Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Leila Granier

Position: FAV

HB0131 - SUPPORT
Cynthia Jacobson and Leila Granier
Montgomery County Residents
Cynthia: cjacobson@maret.org (301) 651-3099
Leila: lgranier@maret.org (301) 642-8394
HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody
January 19, 2022

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in strong support of HB0131. We urge you to vote **favorably** on HB0131.

We are Leila Granier and Cynthia Jacobson, and we are testifying as high school seniors and residents of Montgomery County. We are speaking in support of HB0131 for chain of custody on synthetic turf fields and infill. As interns, we have conducted primary research on the chain of custody issue in summer of 2021 for the Safe Healthy Playing Fields, Inc. a 501.c3.

The Synthetic Turf Council and its clients are not honoring their commitment to responsible recycling. They have long claimed to be good stewards with repurposing, reusing and recycling. This is not what we found, but this is their chance to show their commitment. This bill requires them to do what they have long talked about and clients are sure to look favorably on it as it assures them that they are dealing with an honest, transparent, accountable vendor. We urge them to embrace this opportunity to demonstrate their responsibility toward communities and the environment.

If we do not impose the requirement for minimal reporting, producers will not provide it voluntarily. We spent many hours last summer collecting data and tracking the exact information that is called for in HB0131. Despite these companies' commitment to recycling, we found that it is impossible to track field materials unless there is explicit cooperation from the field owners and producers. This bill has the potential to be constructive since it will require field owners to take a small amount of responsibility for the disposal of what we calculate to be about 800,000 pounds of pulverized tire crumb and 100,000 pounds of pulverized plastic per average 80,000 sq ft field (this is based on an average 40,000 tires per average field multiplied by 20 pounds per average tire.)

The producers are not being held responsible for the disposal of massive amounts of potentially environmentally harmful material. We know from field maintenance personnel that fields lose 20,000-100,000 pounds of tire crumbs into the local environment and stormwater system per year. If they are being dumped, or even if they are going to a landfill or incinerator, they pose a problem not only to the community that houses the field, but also to the location where they are dumped. Field owners are not currently held responsible for the disposal process, leaving the local community to clean up the mess. Frankly, it is our generation that will have to deal with the consequences.

Used fields from Maryland are being dumped in landfills in MD, VA, and likely in other places. They get dumped on private property in farm fields, woods, and rural areas. They are now being reinstalled in residential neighborhoods as well.

Downstream effects can be devastating on watersheds. In order to shed light on and develop an understanding of these contamination levels in local watersheds, it is imperative that we track this chain of custody in the disposal process.

It is critical to recognize the scale of this issue. We are dealing with an enormous amount of loose and unencapsulated synthetic material. We argue that if a producer sells a synthetic field with about 800,000 pounds of pulverized tires and silica sand, and about 100,000 pounds of multiple types of plastic, then they should absolutely be held responsible for the disposal of that product. As of now, they are not.

The goal of this bill is not to infringe on the producers, companies, or field owners, but rather to apply a standard of responsibility and transparency in their disposal methods, which impact local communities. This bill is asking for the bare minimum. There is no requirement for any approval from the government. They just have to list the facts. We simply want to know where the material goes.

It is our generation that must clean up the mess caused by the decisions being made now. At least give us a fighting chance to know where to begin.

We support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

HB131-Synthetic Turf Chain of Custody-E&T-FEIGHNER

Uploaded by: Liz Feighner

Position: FAV

Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody

Submitting: Liz Feighner

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

As a resident of Howard County, District 13, who is concerned about plastic waste, I urge you to vote favorably on HB131. Howard County has installed synthetic turf throughout and I have concerns about how the turf is being handled for disposal when it has reached its useful lifespan.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal to the Department of the Environment. Currently there are no such regulations to track the entire synthetic turf life cycle despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand).

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be landfilled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

A chain of custody is necessary to prevent illegal dumping or irresponsible disposal since the technology for recycling synthetic turf is complicated and has not been fully developed. Stakeholders and residents have the right to know what happens to these toxic materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

I support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

Liz Feighner
Laurel, MD
District 13

LEHMAN TESTIMONY ON HB 131 CHAIN OF CUSTODY.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV

DELEGATE MARY A. LEHMAN
Legislative District 21
Prince George's and
Anne Arundel Counties

Environment and Transportation
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 317
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Mary.Lehman@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 131 – ENVIRONMENT – SYNTHETIC TURF AND TURF INFILL – CHAIN OF
CUSTODY**

SUPPORT

GOOD MORNING MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. VICE CHAIR AND COLLEAGUES. I AM REQUESTING FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF HB 131 CREATING A CHAIN OF CUSTODY REPORTING SYSTEM FOR SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS. THIS IS MY FOURTH YEAR WORKING ON THIS ISSUE AND MY APPROACH HAS EVOLVED OVER THAT TIME, BUT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE, THIS IS THE VERY SAME BILL I BROUGHT TO THE COMMITTEE LAST YEAR. IT WAS NEVER VOTED ON BUT I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT WILL CHANGE THIS YEAR.

IN THE SPIRIT OF EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY LAWS, WHICH EXIST ALL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR CARPET, PAINT, BATTERIES AND MANY OTHER PRODUCTS, HB 131 REQUIRES MANUFACTURERS AND PRODUCERS BUT ALSO OWNERS OF SYNTHETIC TURF AND TURF INFILL TO REPORT TRACKING INFORMATION TO THE MD DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT FOR PUBLICATION ON ITS WEB SITE.

SYNTHETIC TURF, ALSO CALLED ARTIFICIAL TURF (AND SOMETIMES REFERRED TO BY A BRAND NAME SUCH AS ASTROTURF OR FIELD TURF) HAS BEEN GROWING IN POPULARITY FOR DECADES. YOU ARE GOING TO HEAR FASCINATING TESTIMONY BY A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE CONDUCTED A TURF INVENTORY ACROSS THE STATE OVER THE PAST YEAR. THE INFORMATION WAS NOT EASY TO OBTAIN AND DOES NOT GIVE AN ENTIRELY COMPLETE PICTURE OF SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS IN MARYLAND, BUT IT SHEDS A LOT OF LIGHT ON A SHADOWY SUBJECT.

THAT IS PART OF THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY THE BILL CREATES. BY FINDING OUT WHERE THESE FIELDS ARE NOW AND WHERE THEY GO AT THE END (AND OCCASIONALLY IN THE MIDDLE) OF THEIR LIVES, THERE WILL BE TRANSPARENCY AND AWARENESS THAT HOPEFULLY WILL LEAD TO INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR REUSE, RECYCLING, REPURPOSING AND RESPONSIBLE DISPOSAL.

THIS CHAIN OF CUSTODY APPROACH TO A SIGNIFICANT SOLID WASTE CHALLENGE IS A REASONABLE ONE THAT IS NONETHELESS IMPORTANT FOR CREATING TRANSPARENCY AROUND SYTHETIC TURF AND TURF INFILL USE AND DISPOSAL.

THE BILL DOES THIS BY REQUIRING REPORTING TO MDE ABOUT WHERE FIELDS CURRENTLY EXIST IN MD AND WHERE THEY GO WHEN THEY ARE MOVED FOR REUSE, RECYCLING, REPURPOSING OR FINAL DISPOSAL.

TWO CATEGORIES OF REPORTERS: THE BILL PLACES REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY ON TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENTITIES.

1. **FOR SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS/INFILL INSTALLED PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2023**, THE OWNER OF THAT FIELD IS THE REPORTING AGENCY. THAT COULD BE A SCHOOL SYSTEM, PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, MUNICIPALITY, UNIVERSITY, PRIVATE SPORTS CLUB OR OTHER ENTITY.
2. **FOR SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS INSTALLED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2023**, THE PRODUCER(S)/MANUFACTURER(S) OF THE TURF FIELD/INFILL IS THE REPORTING AGENCY.

COPROMISE PROVISIONS IN HB 131 THE PURPOSE OF HB 131 IS TO CREATE A REPOSITORY OF INFORMATION ON A PUBLIC WEB SITE ABOUT WHERE SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS EXIST IN MD AND WHERE THEY GO WHEN THEY ARE MOVED. IT DOES NOT ATTEMPT TO PRESCRIBE THE WAYS IN WHICH THE CARPET OR INFILL CAN OR SHOULD BE REUSED, REPURPOSED, RECYCLED OR DISPOSED OF. IT SAYS ONLY THAT THE INFORMATION MUST BE REPORTED TO MDE.

FOLLOWING LAST YEAR'S ENT HEARING, I MADE SEVERAL CHANGES AT THE REQUEST OF THE SYNTHETIC TURF COUNCIL INCLUDING:

1. INCREASING THE SQUARE FOOTAGE OF FIELDS THE LAW WOULD APPLY TO, FROM 5,000 SQ. FT. TO 15,000 SQ. FT.
2. DROPPING THE PENALTY PROVISION THAT GAVE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DISCRETION TO FINE REPEAT OFFENDERS. FOR FAILURE TO REPORT CHAIN OF CUSTODY INFORMATION, A VIOLATOR WILL FIRST GET A WRITTEN WARNING, THEN A FINE OF UP TO \$500, AND FOR THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES, A FINE OF UP TO \$1,000.

AS A RESULT OF THOSE CHANGES, STC WITHDREW ITS OPPOSITION TO THE BILL AND INDICATED IT COULD LIVE WITH A CHAIN OF CUSTODY LAW.

MR. CHAIRMAN, I BELIEVE A CHAIN OF CUSTODY APPROACH IS WORKABLE FOR BOTH SYNTHETIC TURF FIELD OWNERS AND PRODUCERS. IT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT STEP IN CREATING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AROUND WHERE SYNTHETIC TURF AND TURF INFILL IS WITHIN THE STATE'S BOUNDARIES DURING ANY PHASE OF ITS LIFE CYCLE. I URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT.

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HB0131-FAV-DTMG-1-19-22.pdf

Uploaded by: Olivia Bartlett

Position: FAV



Olivia Bartlett, Co-Lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB0131 - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Bill Contact: Delegate Mary Lehman

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 3000 members across all districts in Montgomery County as well as several nearby jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep all the members of our communities healthy and safe in a clean environment and that address equity for all residents in our communities. DTMG strongly supports HB0131 because it will provide transparency about disposal of toxic used synthetic turf and turf infill for synthetic turf fields above 15,000 sq ft.

Synthetic turf fields are made from rolls of plastic “grass” blades weighed down and filled in with hundreds of thousands of pounds of “infill” made from ground up used tires, silica sand, and/or alternative plastic particles. The plastic “grass” contains PFAS and other toxins and ground up tires are also known to contain multiple toxins. Each synthetic turf playing field contains about 200 tons of toxic mixed plastic waste: approximately two acres of plastic carpet with infill, typically from about 40,000 shredded waste tires or other plastic infill.

The removal and replacement cycle for synthetic turf fields is typically every six to ten years. This results in a huge amount of toxic waste. Local, national, and international media outlets have covered the growing problem of synturf waste. *The Atlantic*, *Salon* and *Maryland Matters* all published “*Fields of Waste*”, an investigative report documenting the massive accumulation of used synthetic turf material throughout the US. There is no recycling of synthetic turf in US. Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, and Montgomery County municipal solid waste facilities report they would decline used synthetic turfs due to volume and weight. There are also no state or federal regulations for safe disposal of synthetic turf or its infill.

Instead, there is a history of unsubstantiated and inaccurate claims from synthetic turf companies regarding the reuse, recycling, and disposal of their product. These are refuted by the many examples of irresponsible disposal – including dumping the material in lower-income communities. The *Maryland Matters* publication included photos of synthetic turf and tire waste infill being moved in May 2018 from a high school in Montgomery County to a property beside Bird River in Baltimore County, which was documented at the time by citizens asking questions and conducting their own research.

HB0131 will address this important and growing problem by requiring each producer of new synthetic turf and turf infill used on playing fields over 15,000 sq. ft. to track the chain of custody of the synthetic

turf and turf infill from manufacture to installation, use, reuse, recycling, and final disposal, and to report the chain of custody to the Maryland Department of the Environment. Owners of existing synthetic turf fields will be required to report the location of the installed field and the chain of custody for its reuse, recycling, and final disposal.

In a 2019 Maryland legislative hearing on disposal of synthetic turf, the president of the leading trade group, the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), acknowledged that there are no laws or regulations regarding the disposal of synthetic turf. The STC itself recommends end-of-life chain of custody certification and describes the disposal issue as “enormous” and “challenging.” STC members can follow its *Guidelines to Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose, and Remove Synthetic Turf Systems*. However, the guidelines are voluntary and there is no incentive to do so. Typical disposal is ‘stockpiling,’ landfill, dumping, or incineration – all resulting in pollution of our environment with plastic, toxic crumb rubber, and other toxic waste.

In the absence of an industry-led initiative, legislation is needed to ensure transparency and accountability when synthetic turf fields and infill reach the end of their lifespan. HB0131 simply requires reporting to MDE each time a field is installed, moved, reused, or disposed. The reporting requirement is a simple, non-burdensome data-point. There is no requirement for any approval from government. Stakeholders and citizens should be able to access a chain of custody showing what happens to the material. The STC’s own guidelines support this goal. STC and individual firms have long claimed to be good stewards who aim for repurposing, reusing, and recycling. This is their chance to show their commitment to our communities and the environment.

The reporting will also assure buyers they are dealing with an honest, transparent, accountable vendor. They should be able to use their compliance with reporting requirement as a selling point. The reporting requirement will also assure buyers their purchase won’t wind up just being dumped somewhere.

Maryland is not alone in facing this problem, but we now have an important opportunity to move toward a solution by enacting HB0131. The bill will prevent improper disposal of a significant quantity of plastic or mostly-plastic material, an increasingly urgent issue. Therefore, DTMG strongly supports HB0131 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Bartlett
Co-lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team
oliviabartlett@verizon.net
240-751-5599

HB131_IndivisibleHoCoMD_FAV_CarolOKeeffe.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard Deutschmann

Position: FAV



HB131 – Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody

Testimony before

House Environment & Transportation Committee

January 19, 2022

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Carol O’Keeffe, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB131**, which will improve transparency around the life cycle of synthetic turf. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate Del. Lehman’s leadership in sponsoring this legislation.

While artificial turf has some environmental benefits in that it requires no water or fertilizer, it is made of old, shredded tires that have a limited lifespan of eight to ten years and poses significant environmental hazards as it degrades. HB 131 is the first step in achieving accountability in the disposal of degraded artificial turf by establishing a “chain of custody” requirement that achieves cradle to grave tracking of the manufacture, installation, use, reuse, recycling and final disposal of synthetic turf and infill. The data must be provided to the Department of Environment which is required to establish a website to display the data. The bill also establishes penalties.

The requirement of HB131 will achieve transparency to assure proper disposal of materials made of plastic or mostly plastic substances that pose a significant threat to our planet and to our collective health and wellbeing. The requirements are non-burdensome and recognize that producers of synthetic turf and infill are in the best position to provide the information for tracking system. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Carol O’Keeffe
Columbia, MD 21042

MASTMA - HB131 Letter of Support (Session 2022) (1

Uploaded by: Robert Navolis

Position: FAV



**House Bill 131: Environment –
*Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill - Chain of Custody and Reuse***

SUPPORT

**House Environment & Transportation Committee
January 19, 2022**

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the House E&T Committee:

The Mid-Atlantic Sports Turf Manager Association (MASTMA) is a new organization that is composed of sports turf field managers and workers from Maryland, Delaware, Washington D.C., and Northern Virginia. As MASTMA members, we partner together to promote education, teamwork, networking, and best practices among our peers and within the Sports Turf Management Industry. Over the last couple of years, MASTMA has created and distributed a [Best Management Practices \(BMP\) manual](#).

One of the focuses of the BMP manual is to highlight industry specific practices that ensure the safety of the community, and that environment remains the top priority in our line of work. It covers topics to help both managers and workers keep fields safe and playable for athletes of all ages, from children to professionals.

On behalf of MASTMA, we officially endorse House Bill 131. We believe that this bill is in the best interest of the environment and will provide accountability for proper disposal of the materials related to synthetic fields. Many of the products used synthetic fields are non-biodegradable and should be disposed of properly and correctly. With the current shift to an organic infill mix, fields are becoming more sustainable; however, the main part of the field is still plastic and should be recycled or disposed of in a way that is best for the environment.

For these reasons, we respectfully seek your consideration and support in providing a *favorable* report to House Bill 131.

Thank you,

MASTMA
BMP Outreach Committee

HB131_FAV_SugarloafCitizens_Findlay

Uploaded by: Steven Findlay

Position: FAV

HB 131 - SUPPORT
Steven Findlay
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association
president@sugarloafcitizens.org 301-908-8659

HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Sugarloaf Citizens' Association, I submit this testimony in support of House Bill 131. We are a citizens' advocacy group based in the Agricultural Reserve of Montgomery County. Our mission is to protect and preserve both the agricultural economy and the natural resources that make up this 93,000-acre part of Montgomery County. Although the work we do primarily focuses on this geographic jurisdiction, the effects of misuse of this area have wide ranging consequences throughout the entire county and beyond. For example, we have fought hard to protect Ten-Mile Creek and the Little Seneca Reservoir, the backup water supply for the entire metropolitan region. Assuring compliance with the zoning of the area has prevented the inappropriate development of land that could compromise this water supply. Similarly, we have been working closely with the County's Department of Environmental Protection to mitigate the toxic effects of incinerating our county's trash.

One of the issues that we have had to fight numerous times is that illegal dumping of toxic or hazardous materials on farmland or in out of the way fields and woodland areas. The Agricultural Reserve is a remarkable example of visionary planning. It has kept farming vibrant and economically feasible near a major metropolitan area and has provided a green lung to the whole region in the form of open space, forests, and a network of clean water systems.

A challenge, however, to having large tracts of land that are not continuously monitored is that they are occasionally abused or used for inappropriate and hazardous purposes. When a contractor or business has no responsibility to provide transparency in how his construction debris or other waste products are handled, there is often temptation to find a solution that is the least cost to him but with enormous consequences to the community that receives it. This is our concern with synthetic turf when it reaches the end of its life span. There is such a large volume of difficult to process material that has the potential for large-scale pollution, it only makes sense that the manufacturer of such materials must take responsibility for that product throughout its lifespan. We know that there is no easy disposal solution for this product but there are legal and acceptable ways to minimize its harmful effects. House Bill 131 will assure that these legal channels of disposal will be followed.

Please pass this very common-sense bill that simply assures that a potentially polluting and hazardous material is handled as safely as possible throughout its lifespan. We urge a favorable report on HB131.

Sincerely,



Steven Findlay, President
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association

HB 131 - Favorable - E&T.pdf

Uploaded by: Suchitra Balachandran

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB131 - Environment-Synthetic Turf & Turf Infill-Chain of Custody

Organization: Our Revolution Prince Georges

Submitting: Suchitra Balachandran [suchitra@ourrevolutionmd.com]

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB131. Our Revolution Prince George's representing over 5500 members countywide urges you to vote favorably on HB131. We support transparency and accountability in disposal of this significant solid waste that will adversely affect our waterways and groundwater when not disposed of appropriately. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent.

This bill would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to report chain of custody of the turf and infill for reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Currently there are no such regulations despite the fact that each turf field contains tens of thousands of pounds of chemical-laden plastic and hundreds of thousands of pounds of granulated infill (usually tire waste, or alternative infills, and silica sand). According to the Synthetic Turf Council, the industry's leading association, one thousand deconstructed fields per year in the U.S. represent 80 million square feet of turf carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill.

Synthetic turf's typical lifespan is a period of 8-10 years. Used synthetic turf materials may be landfilled, incinerated, repurposed or dumped in communities which then must deal with the waste. The synthetic component materials that make up artificial turf carpet systems contain known aquatic and human toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, heavy metals, carcinogens, and immune disruptors such as PFAS, or "forever chemicals."

Several Maryland municipal waste facilities do not accept the volume, weight, and mixture of synthetic turf which then leads to illegal dumping. Numerous examples of

irresponsible disposal exist including dumped or stockpiled material in lower income communities, including a 2018 example where a turf field from Richard Montgomery High School in Montgomery County was dumped near the Bird River in Baltimore County. Another field (Walter Johnson HS) was reportedly shipped to an uncertain fate halfway around the world in Malaysia.

The technology for recycling synthetic turf, which involves separating the plastic grass and backing from the sand and rubber infill is complicated and has not been fully developed, so when a synthetic turf owner wants to do the right thing and tries to recycle, they have limited options. Right now, municipalities and jurisdictions in Maryland as well as other regions across the country where these plastic carpets are dumped are the same jurisdictions that are forced to deal with the environmental and physical mess as they have no way of knowing who dumped the used turf without a chain of custody tracking system, as proposed in HB131. A Chain of Custody system will also be a support for responsible recycling when that becomes available since the fate of the field will become transparent and customers will want to do the right thing.

Our environment, waterways and municipalities suffer from inappropriate disposal of the plastic carpeting and infill from synthetic turf. Stakeholders have the right to know what happens to materials and hold those responsible for the materials accountable through a documented chain of custody reporting. Transparency and accountability regarding synthetic turf disposal must be required.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

MACPRA Position HB131 1-17-22.pdf

Uploaded by: Steve Miller

Position: FWA



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY
PARK & RECREATION ADMINISTRATORS
(MACPRA)

**2022 MD General Assembly
House Bill 131**

Establishing a chain-of-custody reporting requirement for synthetic turf fields in Maryland.

To: Environment and Transportation

Date: January 17, 2022

Position: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

As a professional association of agencies responsible for providing safe facilities and activities for Maryland residents, MACPRA supports the general purpose of HB 131 establishing a statewide inventory of synthetic turf fields through a chain of custody system. MACPRA promotes the safe use, re-use, and/or disposal of synthetic turf materials and a statewide inventory could assist in this effort.

MACPRA does have concern that language included in the bill, with specific reference to turf infill materials, requires more clarification. Rubber infill material found on athletic fields tends to migrate, particularly in heavy-use areas. As a result, regular maintenance is required which often includes adding or moving infill materials.

As written, the bill does not acknowledge this reality nor provide clear direction as to what extent “chain of custody” might be required to perform these types of critical maintenance and safety functions. Depending on how this is applied, the legislation could become impractical and burdensome on turf owners and operators.

The Maryland Association of County Park & Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) is an affiliate of the Maryland Association of Counties and represents County Parks and Recreation departments, including Baltimore City – the professionals engaged in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services throughout Maryland.

HB 131 - FieldTurf Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Darren Gill

Position: UNF

January 17, 2022

Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Written Testimony in opposition of: House Bill No. 131:

Submitted by:
Darren Gill
Senior Vice-President of Marketing & Innovation
FieldTurf
175 N Industrial Blvd NE, Calhoun GA 30701

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stain and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Darren Gill and on behalf of FieldTurf, I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 131. Mandating that synthetic turf producers track installed fields from manufacture to final disposal is onerous, presents several logistical issues, does nothing to discourage dumping or encourage reuse of old fields, and will result in less available recreational spaces for Marylanders.

FieldTurf is the largest turf manufacturer in North America and the inventor of infilled artificial turf. We have installed over 25,000 fields globally and are the leading supplier in the State of Maryland. Some of our local clients include the University of Maryland and Towson University, along with numerous counties across the State.

FieldTurf has made great strides promoting the reuse and penalizing the improper disposal of synthetic turf. In 2021 we launched a program called **Goal Zero**, the first of its kind in the industry – committing to an ambitious zero waste to landfill goal by 2025. We remain committed to leading the industry and believe that we are at the forefront of some exciting reuse and recycling options for our clients.

Moreover, the Synthetic Turf Council has released several model programs and industry guidelines that would effectively encourage turf recycling at a lower/no risk to the taxpayer than Bill 131. These guidelines outline best practices on proper disposal and reuse methods for field owners, school boards, athletic directors, government agencies, and municipal officials. Each component of synthetic turf can be recycled or put into a secondary use, and the industry has worked to educate customers on all their available options.

Despite our aforementioned commitment to recycling along with the launch of Goal Zero, we are in opposition of House Bill No. 131 for the following reasons:

- **The structure of the chain of custody in Bill 131 presents several issues, which will result in "orphaned" synthetic turf fields and confusing jurisdictions.**
 - The chain of custody process in Bill 131 puts the burden of reporting and tracking on artificial turf producers, rather than field owners. If producers end commercial operations over the long lifecycle of the synthetic turf field, it will result in fields being "orphaned" and untracked on the government's database. Also, many synthetic turf fields include components from multiple manufacturers, meaning chain of custody ownership often

cannot be assigned to a single company. Furthermore, the chain of custody as currently outlined does not correctly track synthetic turf that is imported out of state and then back in state, as there is no chain of custody tracking outside Maryland. A better tracking solution would be to assign the chain of custody responsibility to field owners or the companies hired to dispose of the fields, who are best equipped manage end of life processing and comment on the state of fields post-installation.

- **The chain of custody procedure described in the bill will not lead to more or safer synthetic turf reuse.**
 - The bill specifies that a chain of custody must be maintained but does not encourage alternate uses for the synthetic turf, nor does it distinguish between dumping or reusing turf. If anything, the increased reporting standards could impose more costs and regulatory hurdles on synthetic turf handling, resulting in more owners opting to dump rather than recycle turf. Field owners often resell individual turf system components or donate them to organizations within their communities, such as local batting cages and youth non-profits. Bill 131 would needlessly complicate this process, essentially requiring that synthetic turf fields be recycled whole.

- **The misguided policies in Bill 131 could disincentive schools and recreation departments from buying synthetic turf, leaving Marylanders worse off.**
 - The increased tracking responsibilities imposed on producers can result in higher upfront installation costs for Maryland's schools and parks departments, as turf manufacturers will have to pass on tracking costs to customers. While the cost of tracking is low for the owners of fields, who regularly maintain the turf, it is high for manufacturers, who do not work with fields post-installation day to day. These hurdles and higher costs will result in more schools opting to maintain grass fields, which are not ADA-compliant and cannot be used year-round, leaving our children and worse off.

FieldTurf remains dedicated to the continuous improvement of the performance and environmental impact of synthetic turf systems and is happy, along with the Synthetic Turf Council, to provide counsel on future bills that would codify established industry guidelines that effectively encourage recycling and proper disposal.

Thank you for your consideration.



Darren Gill
Senior Vice-President of Marketing & Innovation
FieldTurf

HB 131 RRC Testimony_Jan2022.pdf

Uploaded by: Kenneth Kirton

Position: UNF

January 19, 2022

Maryland General Assembly
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Written Testimony in opposition of: House Bill No. 131:

Submitted by:
Stratton Kirton
Recycled Rubber Coalition

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stain and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Stratton Kirton and on behalf of the Recycled Rubber Coalition, I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 131. Requiring synthetic turf producers to maintain responsibility for sold, installed fields from manufacture to final disposal is absurd, logistically burdensome, and completely misses the mark on encouraging responsible reuse and recycling of fields. In the end, if enacted, this bill would only result in needless complications and less available recreational spaces for Marylanders.

The Recycled Rubber Coalition is a group representing rubber recyclers, synthetic turf companies, and other groups with an interest in the rubber recycling industry. Our members have a history of operations in Maryland, including a number of turf fields in the state, and thus care deeply about what happens here and how it could affect Maryland.

The Recycled Rubber Coalition and the entire rubber recycling industry have made great strides promoting the reuse and recycling of rubber materials—and one of the materials rubber is frequently recycled into is synthetic turf. As an industry whose primary function is ensuring reuse, the recycled rubber industry greatly supports the synthetic turf industry's longstanding commitment to promoting the responsible reuse and recycling of turf fields. In recent years, the Synthetic Turf Council has released resources such as model programs and industry guidelines that would effectively encourage and support turf recycling—at a much lower risk to the taxpayer than the measures proposed in Bill 131. These guidelines, which can be used by field owners, school boards, athletic directors, government agencies, and municipal officials, outline best practices on proper disposal and reuse methods. To assist field owners and related groups, the guidelines break down exactly how each component of synthetic turf can be recycled or put into a secondary use. The industry has worked to educate customers on all their available options.

The chain-of-custody structure mandated by Bill 131 presents a number of serious complications, which will likely result in an abundance of "orphaned" synthetic turf fields and unnecessarily confusing jurisdictions. The chain-of-custody process currently outlined in Bill 131 places reporting and tracking responsibility on the producers of artificial turf, rather than field owners or companies who are contracted and paid to dispose of fields at the end of their life. With synthetic turf having a long lifespan of around 10 years or more, it's easy to imagine that some producers may end commercial operations during that time. This reality of industry would result in fields being "orphaned" by the time the field needs to be replaced—with

no clear responsible party. In addition to this complication, many synthetic turf fields are composed of materials sourced from multiple manufacturers, leaving companies unclear on how to assign ownership to a single party. Furthermore, the chain-of-custody mandated by this bill would not correctly track synthetic turf that has traveled out of state and then returned to Maryland, as there is no chain-of-custody reporting outside of Maryland. A clear, simple solution would be to assign these responsibilities to field owners or the companies hired to dispose of the fields. These parties would have more direct knowledge of the state of the field at the time of removal and be overall best-equipped to manage end-of-life processing. Further, owner responsibility would reduce the risk of "orphaned" fields as well as make chain-of-custody more straightforward.

A clear, simple solution would be to assign these responsibilities to field owners, or the companies hired to dispose of the fields. These parties would have more direct knowledge of the state of the field at the time of removal and be overall best-equipped to manage end-of-life processing. Further, by shifting responsibility to owners, the bill would ensure that turf owners retain their property and bargaining rights by enabling them to pursue recycling and reuse options for their fields at the end of their lifespans.

The needlessly complicated policies in Bill 131 could discourage schools and recreation departments from buying synthetic turf in the first place, leaving Maryland students, athletes, and residents worse off. The imposition of burdensome tracking responsibilities—and fear of future regulations—could quickly result in higher costs for the installation, maintenance, and disposal of turf fields in Maryland schools and parks, as turf manufacturers begin to pass tracking costs on to buyers. Turf owners, who purchased these fields with the knowledge they would someday need replacing, would likely be able to deal with these issues at lower costs than manufacturers. The increase in costs that would be associated with this bill could force school districts to opt out of upgrading to ADA-compliant, year-round turf fields, leaving Maryland children and athletes worse off.

In all, the Recycled Rubber Coalition remains dedicated to ensuring the responsible recycling and reuse of synthetic turf systems. While we unfortunately cannot support this bill, the Coalition would be happy, along with the Synthetic Turf Council, to provide counsel on future bills to encourage the recycling of synthetic turf, rubber, and related materials.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stratton Kirton

Spokesperson
The Recycled Rubber Coalition

2022 MD HB 131 - Statement of ISRI.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Rannie

Position: UNF

Written Statement of
Mark Rannie, Chairman, Tire and Rubber Division
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
on Maryland House Bill 131
before the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
January 19, 2022

Members of the Committee, I respectfully submit this statement on behalf of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) Tire and Rubber Division and its member companies. ISRI is the trade association that represents approximately 1,300 companies that process, broker, and industrially consume recyclable commodities including metals, paper, plastics, glass, textiles, rubber, and electronics. My company, Emanuel Tire, LLC, is an ISRI member company based in Baltimore, MD, and employs over 200 individuals. In the state of Maryland, the recycling industry directly supports over 1,700 jobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 131, an act concerning synthetic turf and turf infill chain of custody. By mandating that manufacturers of individual components of a synthetic turf field system are responsible for the end-of-life management of fields, ISRI believes that, as with previous session versions considered by this committee, this legislation will hurt Maryland businesses like mine that have invested in the Maryland recycling infrastructure to help develop end markets for recycled content for materials such as tires, and will limit the beneficial use and recycling of synthetic turf and infill, which is a valuable end market for recycled tires and rubber.

Emanuel Tires and the Tire Recycling Industry

Emanuel Tire Family of Companies, under the leadership of Norman Emanuel, has been in the scrap tire business for 60 years. We have received national recognition for our efforts to establish standards in the scrap tire industry and for deriving new uses for shredded tires. Emanuel Tire was a founding member of the National Association of Scrap Tire Processors (NASTP) – which is now the Tire & Rubber Division of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI). Emanuel Tire has sat on the ISRI Board of Directors and is innately familiar with the development of state and national scrap tire recycling programs.

The Emanuel Tire Family of Companies processes over 17 million tires per year, typically received from one of three sources: tires delivered to our plant by individuals or companies; trailers or pick-up services at locations where customers have large volume of tires; and the clean-up of private or government owned stockpiles.

Tires are shred and used in one of a number existing and promising markets, including:

- Tire Chips shredded to customer specification and used in civil engineering projects;
- Safe-T-Play and Safe-T-Footing 100% wire free playground and horse arena material;
- Recycled Reclaim Industry Material (RRIM), used by industry processors who fine grind our material then mold them for cattle mats, athletic surfacing and flooring tiles;
- Tire Derived Fuel (TDF) a fuel source in many kilns and energy plants;
- Septic System Material (SSM) used in commercial and residential drainage fields;
- Sound Wall Material rubber chips used to make highway noise reduction walls; and
- Forever Mulch, a colorized chip used in landscaping and architectural enhancement.

Emanuel Tire is committed to the environmentally safe use of tire products. We are licensed and recognized by the Maryland Department of the Environment, Pennsylvania Department of Environment and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality as a Scrap Tire Hauler, Scrap Tire Collection Facility and a Scrap Tire Recycler. Additionally, Emanuel Tire employs an OSHA approved Environmental, Health and Safety program at all of our facilities.

Recyclables Are Valuable Commodities in the Circular Economy

The components of synthetic turf are valuable commodities traded and sold in global markets. Recyclables are commodities processed into tradable and highly valued specification-grade products that manufacturers use as raw material inputs to make new products. HB 131 imposes a producer-responsibility control mechanism on synthetic turf and turf infill components that is not appropriate for valuable recyclable commodities for which there is a vibrant and active marketplace.

Chain of Custody / Manifest Models do not fit Synthetic Turf Fields

While chain of custody systems are an excellent way to ensure compliance with scrap tire recycling requirements, tires represent a fundamentally different product than synthetic turf fields; what works for one simply does not work for the other. For tires, a chain of custody is clear and should be immediate: from generator, to hauler, to scrap tire recycler.

However, synthetic turf fields are installed by one or more contractors using products from multiple different producers, all of which have different multi-year effective lifespans until they must be repaired or replaced, and all of which have different end-of-life management strategies to ensure the highest use of the valuable commodities that make up the turf field components and highest returned value to their owner. Imposing a chain of custody through the producer will require continual monitoring of (and control over) those products, interfering with the property owner's right to manage their own property, and will be inherently complex and prone to failure.

Maryland Recycling Businesses & Individual Property Rights will be Harmed

By requiring that the producer or, for fields already in installed as of January 1, 2023, the current owner of synthetic turf and turf infill, establish a chain of custody tracking system for all of the disparate materials that make up a synthetic turf field, HB 131 would impose administrative burdens and responsibility for ongoing monitoring of and control over products either on

- The multiple individual producers of the components of a synthetic turf field, creating a complex chain of responsibility if the components are not all retired for recycling at the same time; or on
- The current owner, who may be disincentivized from seeking higher use end-of-life management options for their field components in order to minimize future administrative burdens or liabilities.

Synthetic turf and infill for athletic fields bring value-added benefits that offset the up-front cost to the property owner, such as limited maintenance compared to grass fields, extended use during colder seasons, and the intrinsic value of the materials used to construct the field. If the property owner chooses to uninstall the synthetic turf, the owner has numerous options to recover some of that value including the recycling and reuse of the valuable commodities that make up the turf. By placing chain of custody responsibility for such products in the hands of the original producers, HB 131 will necessitate that those same producers retain control over their end-of-life management.

This legislation would also hurt Maryland businesses like my own that have invested in recycling technology and infrastructure here in the state of Maryland, which helps Maryland achieve its own recycling goals. The legislation usurps control of the free market flow and management of recyclable materials from the owners and recyclers. This entire concept is troubling at the very least and clearly stifles innovation and new entries into the market for the reuse and recycling of materials such as the components in the turf.

Conclusion

Maryland House Bill 131 will deprive turf field owners of their property and bargaining rights to seek out best use recycling options for their fields at the end of their current use, and harm the beneficial use and ultimate recycling of synthetic turf and synthetic turf infill. By mandating that manufacturers of individual components of a synthetic turf field system are responsible for the end-of-life management of fields, ISRI believes that this legislation will take power over end-of-life management decisions from field owners and limit the recyclability of synthetic turf and infill, not encourage it.

Because of this, and on behalf of all tire recyclers working to improve our environment and economy by keeping valuable recyclable materials out of landfills, I urge this distinguished committee to oppose this legislation.

Mark Rannie
Chair, Tire and Rubber Division, ISRI
Vice President, Emanuel Tire LLC
1300 Moreland Ave
Baltimore, MD 21216-4115
(410) 947-0660
mrannie@emanueltire.com

HB 131 STC Testimony-Jan2022.pdf

Uploaded by: Melanie Taylor

Position: UNF



January 17, 2022

Maryland General Assembly
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Written Testimony in opposition of: House Bill No. 131:

Submitted by:
Melanie Taylor
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
2331 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill, MD 21050

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stain and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Melanie Taylor and on behalf of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 131. Mandating synthetic turf and infill producers to track installed fields from manufacture to final disposal presents several logistical issues, including complicated chain-of-custody disputes. Bill 131 does nothing to discourage dumping or encourage proper reuse, repurposing or recycling, resulting in higher fees and potentially less use of available recreational spaces for Marylanders.

The STC is headquartered in Forest Hill, Maryland and is the world's largest organization representing the synthetic turf industry. Founded in 2003, the STC represents over 230 members and promotes industry excellence through guidelines, certifications, and other learning platforms. Membership includes builders, landscape architects, engineers, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill material suppliers, specialty service companies and buyers and end-users, such as athletic directors, municipal officials, researchers, university professors and students.

On behalf of the entire synthetic turf industry, the STC promotes the proper reuse and denounces improper disposal of synthetic turf. The STC has released several model programs and industry guidelines that would effectively encourage turf repurposing and/or recycling at a lower/no risk to the taxpayer than Bill 131. These guidelines outline best practices on proper end-of-life handling for field owners, school boards, athletic directors, government agencies, and municipal officials. Each component of synthetic turf can be recycled or put into a secondary use, and the industry has worked to educate customers on all their available options. We are also encouraged by product and process innovation in the industry making great progress towards more sustainable and environmentally responsible solutions for customers.

The structure of the chain of custody in Bill 131 presents several issues, which will result in "orphaned" synthetic turf fields and confusing jurisdictions. The chain of custody process in Bill 131 puts the burden of reporting and tracking on synthetic turf producers, rather than field owners. If producers end commercial operations over the long lifecycle of the synthetic turf field, it will result in



fields being "orphaned" and untracked on the government's database. Also, many synthetic turf fields include components from multiple manufacturers, meaning chain of custody ownership often cannot be assigned to a single company. Furthermore, the chain of custody as currently outlined does not correctly track synthetic turf that is exported out of state and then imported back in state, as there is no chain of custody tracking outside Maryland. A more appropriate tracking solution would be to assign the chain of custody responsibility initially to field owners and subsequently to the companies hired to remove the fields and so on, ultimately assigning responsibility to those who take possession and ownership of the materials.

The chain of custody procedure described in the bill will not lead to more or safer synthetic turf reuse or recycling. The bill specifies that a chain of custody must be maintained but does not encourage alternate uses for the synthetic turf, nor does it distinguish between dumping or reusing and recycling turf. If anything, the increased reporting standards could impose more costs and regulatory hurdles on synthetic turf handling, resulting in more owners opting to dump rather than recycle turf. Field owners often resell individual turf system components or donate them to organizations within their communities, such as local driving ranges, band practice fields, pet parks, bullpens and batting cages and equestrian stables.

The misguided policies in Bill 131 could disincentivize schools and recreation departments from buying synthetic turf, leaving Marylanders worse off. The increased tracking responsibilities imposed on producers can result in higher upfront installation costs for Maryland's schools and parks departments, as turf manufacturers will have to pass on tracking costs to customers. While the cost of tracking is low for the owners of fields, who regularly maintain the turf, it is high for manufacturers, who do not work with fields post-installation day to day and who would ultimately take on an unknown level of effort and risk. These hurdles and higher costs will result in more schools opting to maintain grass fields, which are already overused and provide significantly lower usage, not ADA-compliant and cannot be used year-round, leaving our children and worse off.

The STC supports the continuous advancement of the safety, performance and growth of recycling opportunities of synthetic turf systems. The STC has discussed this bill with the sponsor, including amendments that more clearly define the duration of ownership for producers and transfer of custody to owners of fields installed after January 1, 2023. The STC is happy to provide counsel on future bills that would codify established industry guidelines that effectively encourage sustainability and proper end-of-life handling.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melanie Taylor
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
www.syntheticurfCouncil.org

Recycled Rubber Coalition

Uploaded by: Stratton Kirton

Position: UNF

January 19, 2022

Maryland General Assembly
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Written Testimony in opposition of: House Bill No. 131:

Submitted by:
Stratton Kirton
Recycled Rubber Coalition

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stain and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Stratton Kirton and on behalf of the Recycled Rubber Coalition, I am writing in opposition to House Bill No. 131. Requiring synthetic turf producers to maintain responsibility for sold, installed fields from manufacture to final disposal is absurd, logistically burdensome, and completely misses the mark on encouraging responsible reuse and recycling of fields. In the end, if enacted, this bill would only result in needless complications and less available recreational spaces for Marylanders.

The Recycled Rubber Coalition is a group representing rubber recyclers, synthetic turf companies, and other groups with an interest in the rubber recycling industry. Our members have a history of operations in Maryland, including a number of turf fields in the state, and thus care deeply about what happens here and how it could affect Maryland.

The Recycled Rubber Coalition and the entire rubber recycling industry have made great strides promoting the reuse and recycling of rubber materials—and one of the materials rubber is frequently recycled into is synthetic turf. As an industry whose primary function is ensuring reuse, the recycled rubber industry greatly supports the synthetic turf industry's longstanding commitment to promoting the responsible reuse and recycling of turf fields. In recent years, the Synthetic Turf Council has released resources such as model programs and industry guidelines that would effectively encourage and support turf recycling—at a much lower risk to the taxpayer than the measures proposed in Bill 131. These guidelines, which can be used by field owners, school boards, athletic directors, government agencies, and municipal officials, outline best practices on proper disposal and reuse methods. To assist field owners and related groups, the guidelines break down exactly how each component of synthetic turf can be recycled or put into a secondary use. The industry has worked to educate customers on all their available options.

The chain-of-custody structure mandated by Bill 131 presents a number of serious complications, which will likely result in an abundance of "orphaned" synthetic turf fields and unnecessarily confusing jurisdictions. The chain-of-custody process currently outlined in Bill 131 places reporting and tracking responsibility on the producers of artificial turf, rather than field owners or companies who are contracted and paid to dispose of fields at the end of their life. With synthetic turf having a long lifespan of around 10 years or more, it's easy to imagine that some producers may end commercial operations during that time. This reality of industry would result in fields being "orphaned" by the time the field needs to be replaced—with

no clear responsible party. In addition to this complication, many synthetic turf fields are composed of materials sourced from multiple manufacturers, leaving companies unclear on how to assign ownership to a single party. Furthermore, the chain-of-custody mandated by this bill would not correctly track synthetic turf that has traveled out of state and then returned to Maryland, as there is no chain-of-custody reporting outside of Maryland. A clear, simple solution would be to assign these responsibilities to field owners or the companies hired to dispose of the fields. These parties would have more direct knowledge of the state of the field at the time of removal and be overall best-equipped to manage end-of-life processing. Further, owner responsibility would reduce the risk of "orphaned" fields as well as make chain-of-custody more straightforward.

A clear, simple solution would be to assign these responsibilities to field owners, or the companies hired to dispose of the fields. These parties would have more direct knowledge of the state of the field at the time of removal and be overall best-equipped to manage end-of-life processing. Further, by shifting responsibility to owners, the bill would ensure that turf owners retain their property and bargaining rights by enabling them to pursue recycling and reuse options for their fields at the end of their lifespans.

The needlessly complicated policies in Bill 131 could discourage schools and recreation departments from buying synthetic turf in the first place, leaving Maryland students, athletes, and residents worse off. The imposition of burdensome tracking responsibilities—and fear of future regulations—could quickly result in higher costs for the installation, maintenance, and disposal of turf fields in Maryland schools and parks, as turf manufacturers begin to pass tracking costs on to buyers. Turf owners, who purchased these fields with the knowledge they would someday need replacing, would likely be able to deal with these issues at lower costs than manufacturers. The increase in costs that would be associated with this bill could force school districts to opt out of upgrading to ADA-compliant, year-round turf fields, leaving Maryland children and athletes worse off.

In all, the Recycled Rubber Coalition remains dedicated to ensuring the responsible recycling and reuse of synthetic turf systems. While we unfortunately cannot support this bill, the Coalition would be happy, along with the Synthetic Turf Council, to provide counsel on future bills to encourage the recycling of synthetic turf, rubber, and related materials.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stratton Kirton

Spokesperson
The Recycled Rubber Coalition

HB0131 Letter of Information.pdf

Uploaded by: Tyler Abbott

Position: INFO



January 19, 2022

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: House Bill 131 - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed House Bill 131, entitled *Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody* and would like to provide additional information regarding the bill.

On or before January 1, 2023, a producer of synthetic turf and turf infill, as defined in the bill, would be required to establish a system to track the chain of custody of the material from its manufacture to its use, reuse, recycling, and final disposal. The producer must report to MDE the chain of custody of the synthetic turf and turf infill from their manufacture and, if known, installation, use, reuse, recycling, or final disposal. Owners of synthetic turf and turf infill installed in the State as of January 1, 2023, would also be required to report to MDE the current geographic location of the installed product and the chain of custody from its use, reuse, recycling, and final disposal during their duration of ownership. MDE would serve as the repository for submitted chain of custody information and be required to develop and maintain a website that includes: copies of submitted chains of custody; the names and contact information of producers, owners, or other individuals that provide chain of custody information; and a list of the brands specified in the chain of custody information. A person found in violation of the bill's chain of custody requirements would be subject to a written warning for the first violation and civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for a third or subsequent violation.

Synthetic turf fields are typically composed of plastic blades of grass and an infill material that can be made of various materials, including crumb rubber from recycled tires. Depending on the materials used, synthetic turf and turf infill would often constitute nonhazardous solid waste that could be managed similarly to other municipal wastes. Additionally, while MDE regulates and imposes certain requirements on the disposal and the recycling of scrap tires, crumb rubber and other products composed of recycled tires are not considered scrap tires under State regulations. Used synthetic turf and turf infill are nonhazardous solid waste that can be reused, recycled, or properly disposed of in a permitted solid waste acceptance facility. If a person's improper

handling of used synthetic turf and turf infill results in the pollution of land or waters of the State, MDE and local governments have existing enforcement authorities provided under the following State laws and regulations to address the violation: the Maryland Litter Control Law's ban on the illegal disposal of litter (Criminal Law Article, §10-110); ban on the discharge of any pollutant, such as solid waste, into the waters of this State (Environment Article, §9-322); and the ban on the disposal of solid waste in an open dump (COMAR 26.04.07.03B(4)).

To provide MDE with sufficient time and resources to properly implement this bill, we propose the date in which producers and owners must establish a system to collect chain of custody information and start reporting to MDE chain of custody information begin no earlier than January 1, 2024. To implement this bill under the current staffing and financial resources at MDE, the Department would need general funds and to hire a temporary Environmental Compliance Specialist contractor. MDE would need to perform extensive research and outreach to identify all of the members of the large regulated community (e.g., public and private schools, institutions of higher education, playing fields, sport leagues, and residential properties owners of synthetic turf fields and businesses that manufacture, sale, maintain, and install synthetic turf fields). In addition, MDE will need to develop standardized chain of custody reporting forms and reporting processes, and an online database that will store submitted chain of custody information. MDE would be unable to receive needed general funds and accomplish all of aforementioned tasks in the current 3-month period between the bill's effective date and the January 1, 2023 compliance date for producers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor House Bill 131 during the Committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at tyler.abbott@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Abbott", written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Abbott

cc: The Honorable Mary A. Lehman
Kaley Laleker, Director, Land and Materials Administration