

House Bill 371

Salt Applicator Certification Program – Maryland Department of the Environment.

Thank you Madame chairman/Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Jim McWilliams, I am the president of the Maryland Green Industry Council and a small business owner in Stoneleigh, just south of Towson; Maxalea Landscape. The Green Industry is opposed to House Bill 371. The following issues will confirm why this proposal program is not good for commercial businesses.

Every snow/ice storm or event as we call them is different. The amount of salt applied could increase the risk of liability for our clients and our workers should someone slip or fall on a site. Freezing rain events can continue for long periods of time, so there is a need for continuous applications of salt or deicing materials. There are no agreed upon manufactured standards (unlike for pesticides or fertilizer) for the use of salt or deicing products. In a lab you know exactly how much salt is needed to achieve an intended result. However, during a snow or salt storm this type of situation does not exist. The nature of the precipitation, temperature, type of surface (asphalt, pavers, concrete) has no standard for how much salt or deicing material will be needed to consider a site safe to walk or drive on. These varying factors and scenarios would make enforcement difficult, if not impossible. It does seem very odd that this bill targets commercial businesses and the biggest user of salt and deicing materials, state and local government agencies. Take a look around now before a snow or ice storm; you will see the dust clouds, white powdered pavement, and salt residue on our highways and primary/secondary streets. Why would they not be included in this bill? When I testified against State Bill 246 last week, one of the proponents of that bill stated, "commercial businesses need to do the right thing!". With all due respect that is insulting that one would think commercial business don't train their employees on proper application of deicing products. The members of the Green Industry are stewards of the environment, we want to preserve the bay, parks, and farmland. We also beautify our customers landscapes using