

2022 GBCC HB 814 Green Business Certification SUPP

Uploaded by: Ashlie Bagwell

Position: FAV



Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce
In **SUPPORT** of
HB 814—Environment-Statewide Green Business Certification Program

*House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 23, 2022*

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 550 businesses located throughout the Greater Bethesda area and beyond. On behalf of these members, we strongly support HB 814—Environment-Statewide Green Business Certification Program.

HB 814 requires the Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program to recognize businesses operating in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and to provide consumers with information on how to identify those businesses. A similar program was established in Montgomery County several years ago. This program aims to not only reward businesses for their environmental leadership, but it also seeks to spark the adoption of broader sustainable best practices throughout the County. Not only do we appreciate that this proposed legislation builds on expanding an already-existing, successful programs, but we also appreciate the “carrot” approach of this voluntary program designed to encourage businesses to take steps to reduce their ecological footprint.

For these reasons, we support HB 814 and urge a favorable vote.

HB 814 - MoCo_Weisburger_FAV (GA 22).pdf

Uploaded by: Douglas Weisburger

Position: FAV



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

HB 814

DATE: February 23, 2022

SPONSOR: Delegate Shetty

ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT PERSON: Douglas Weisburger (Douglas.Weisburger@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support (Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection)

Environment – Statewide Green Business Certification Program

House Bill 814 requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish and administer a Statewide green business certification program. The program must recognize businesses that operate in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and provide consumers with a way to identify businesses that have been certified as green businesses.

Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) is excited by the prospect of the State creating a voluntary Green Business Certification Program (like Montgomery County's) to complement the existing Maryland Green Registry, managed by MDE. It is possible the two programs can be merged into one to create two tiers. The Green Registry could serve as a foundational program and on-ramp to a certification program involving third-party verification for green business leaders wanting to take their day-to-day environmental practices to the next level.

For such a two-tiered program to be successful, the certification program should be distinctly more robust than the Green Business Registry. This difference will provide an incentive for businesses to pursue certification and be recognized for their more ambitious efforts.

Additionally, the program must be fully funded to ensure a comprehensive operation that meets the expectations of the business community seeking certification. MCDEP stands willing to work with MDE to help develop and, where feasible, implement a statewide program when this bill is signed into law.

Regardless of the precise arrangement, there are a number of benefits to a Statewide Green Business Certification Program:

- **Utilization of Third-Party Expertise** – The Montgomery County Green Business Certification is an “umbrella” program in which the County

automatically recognize businesses certified through any of 10 robust third-party standards. The County does not have specific expertise in sectors like commercial cleaning or greening a restaurant, so it simply relies on these third parties to conduct verification and provide businesses with guidance. There are no costs to the County, and the third-party organizations are paid by the business pursuing certification.

- **Flexibility** – The County continually adds new third-party standards. A few years ago, the County decided to add organic farms; three years ago the County became aware of a very high standard for organic textiles after an organic mattress producer opened a showroom in the County. Similarly, the State can continually add third-party standards.
- **Cascading Benefits** – With a third-party certification program, jurisdictions can establish programs that incentivize businesses to pursue ambitious sustainability goals. In Montgomery County, certified green businesses in its vendor database get a green business designation which allows procurement officials to narrow their vendor search by using a green screen. In Prince George’s County, which has a program like Montgomery County, certified green businesses can get a property tax benefit.
- **Drives B to B Commerce** – Businesses seek out other businesses that share their values. Being able to easily identify corporate sustainability leaders through a State certification program, would, for example, drive a Green Seal certified cleaning company to seek out a Certified Green Restaurant to cater their board meeting. Similarly, that Certified Green Restaurant might seek out a local farm for its organic fruit, vegetables, etc.
- **Accelerate Development of the Green Economy** – Establishing a Statewide green business certification program will help drive demand for green products and services. This, in turn, will help establish Maryland as a green business destination and bolster a fundamentally important engine of our economic development.

MCDEP supports House Bill 814 and respectfully urges a favorable Committee report.

FAV_HB814_DeIShetty.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Shetty

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB814

**Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program -
Statement of SUPPORT**

Chairman Barve, Vice Chair Stein and esteemed members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB814, a bill that will, as written, establish a statewide Green Business Certification Program, based in part on the successful program currently running in Montgomery County. This introduced bill is identical to a bill that passed out of this committee in both 2020 and 2021, and out of the House of Delegates both years, but did not have enough time for consideration in the Senate prior to adjournment. This year, this bill has been cross-filed with Senator Lam and has been heard before the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

In December 2009, Montgomery County, in partnership with Montgomery College and the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, launched a green business certification program to encourage businesses to implement environmentally-friendly practices. The program is voluntary and robust, and includes participation from a number of diverse businesses from hotels to restaurants, grocery stores and local farms.

The state of Maryland currently operates a Maryland Green registry, a voluntary state-wide program in which businesses can self-evaluate and determine how they qualify. Around 560 businesses state-wide participate, and the program provides “resources to help businesses and other organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability.”¹ Businesses sign up online, identify five green practices, and provide one measurable result.

By contrast, the Montgomery County program is more rigorous. It includes a separate audit by the Department of Environmental Protection every three years, and allows businesses to receive recognition if they are already enrolled in other recognized national green business certification programs. Businesses certify that they engage in certain green best-practices including waste management/reduction, reducing the use of certain pesticides on agriculture, using organic or alternative materials, and engaging in methods that promote increased air and water quality. In 2015, the certification program expanded eligibility as an umbrella recognition program, accepting businesses certified through outside third party

¹ MD Green Registry: <https://mde.maryland.gov/MarylandGreen/Pages/Home.aspx>

standards and allowing nearly all sectors to be eligible.² Sectors eligible for certification include restaurants, offices, hotels, cleaning companies, landscapers, home-based businesses, farms and others.

Under Montgomery County's program, the DEP makes an appointment every three years with the GBC business or soon-to-be-GBC business and goes through a checklist.³ There are six sections of the application that include:

- organizational commitment,
- waste reduction,
- environmentally preferred purchasing,
- energy/water efficiencies,
- transportation/travel practices,
- Sustainable Landscaping and Stormwater Management.

There are 10-20 items under each of those qualifications. Some are as easy as putting up signs, while others are more detailed like purchasing recycled content or offering a mass transit benefit for employees that utilize it to get to work. The Montgomery County program charges businesses \$100 to enroll, however if the business is certified under a third-party program, those programs can range from \$100 to \$25,000.

By qualifying for any of the various certifications, businesses receive recognition and benefits from being a Green Business. These benefits include: increasing sustainability, increased consumer support and competition, and creating a healthy work environment. Several states have Green Business Programs including CA, AZ, CO, IL, NE, WA.⁴

The sponsor amendment that has been shared with this committee and with EHE amends the bill to establish a study that would be conducted by the University of Maryland's Sustainable Maryland program. The study requires that the Sustainable Maryland program consult with stakeholders from across the state, and within 18 months make recommendations to this Committee and to the Senate EHE Committee on how to best establish a green business program that addresses the triple bottom line. The amendment makes this bill stronger, as it ensures that the program built here in Maryland is based on data and ultimately is complementary to our existing state green registry.

Respectfully, I request a favorable report on HB814. Thank you.

² Third-parties included: B Lab, Green America, the Green Restaurant Association, Green Seal, the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System, Veriflora® Sustainably Grown, USDA Organic Program, Certified Naturally Grown and the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS).

³ Montgomery County GBC Checklist: <http://www.mcgreenbiz.org/s/Green-Office-Application.xlsx>

⁴ National Green Business Tracker: <https://greenbiztracker.org/site/participating>

EFC UMD Jen Cotting Testimony Sustainable Maryland

Uploaded by: Jennifer Cotting

Position: FAV



ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER

Favorable Testimony – HB 0814

Dear Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on this important legislation: HB 0814 – Statewide Green Business Certification Program as amended by Delegate Shetty.

The Department of the Environment’s Maryland Green Registry (MDE) program has proven highly successful at engaging Maryland’s business community in expanding the use of sustainable business practices and reducing the business sector’s environmental footprint. The dedication of MDE personnel, the tools and resources available through the program, and the ease of accessing the program have ensured its popularity among the business community. The study suggested in HB 0814 presents an opportunity to build on the success of Maryland Green Registry’s recognition program and lay the groundwork for a more robust voluntary statewide certification program for those businesses that are interested in achieving even higher levels of sustainability in the face of a changing climate and an increased demand for the business sector to achieve even greater benefits to the environment, economy, and society.

As an organization that has built a municipal sustainability certification program from the ground up, we are keenly aware of the critical need to engage a wide swath of stakeholders from the very beginning to ensure the development of a program that is meaningful and truly serves the needs of its audience, as well as a credential that is defensible. The study suggested in HB 0814 looks to examine successful local business certification programs in the state and elsewhere and leverage the solid reputation of the existing Maryland Green Registry program. It will give state agencies and the nonprofit and business communities a voice in shaping the structure and function of a statewide certification program.

Connecting consumers with businesses that are making sustainable choices is important to improving the quality of life for all Marylanders. A carefully thought-out statewide certification program rooted in foundation of the Maryland Green Registry and informed by an independent, broad-sweeping stakeholder engagement process will ensure the success of the program. We hope for a favorable report.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Cotting".

Jennifer Cotting
Director

MD Catholic Conference_FAV_HB0814.pdf

Uploaded by: MJ Kraska

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 23, 2022

**HB 814
Environment – Statewide Green Business Certification Program**

Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch) dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

House Bill 814 allows the Department of the Environment to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program; requiring the green business certification program to recognize businesses operating in a way that reduces their environmental footprint and to provide consumers with information on how to identify those businesses. Additionally, requiring the Department to update and enhance the statewide green business certification program in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program.

In his encyclical, *On Care for Our Common Home (Laudato Si’)*, Pope Francis tells us, “Whenever these questions are raised, some react by accusing others of irrationally attempting to stand in the way of progress and human development. But we need to grow in the conviction that a decrease in the pace of production and consumption can at times give rise to another form of progress and development. Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money, but rather an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term... We know how unsustainable is the behavior of those who constantly consume and destroy, while others are not yet able to live in a way worthy of their human dignity”.

House Bill 814 aims to address the much needed reforms to energy consumption policies and standards to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and hope they are a catalyst for meaningful ecological policy reform.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 814.

Green Business Certification 2022.pdf

Uploaded by: nanci Wilkinson

Position: FAV

Committee: House Environment & Transportation Committee

Legislation: HB 0814 (cross filed SB 0308) Requiring the Department of the Environment to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program to recognize businesses operating in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and provide consumers with information on how to identify those businesses; and requiring the Department to update and enhance the statewide green business certification program in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program.

Organization: Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Position: Favorable

Hearing: February 23, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

The Environmental Justice Ministry supports this legislation HB 0814 cross filed with SB 0308 in order to establish a statewide green business certification program which will encourage businesses to improve their practical green applications to business. This is an important step in involving more businesses throughout the state to focus on critical elements that will help consumers identify them. Further, it mandates the MDE consult with the Montgomery County green certification program to enhance the program.

Please vote favorably for this bill.

Nanci Wilkinson

Environmental Justice Ministry Team

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

HB814.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard Tabuteau

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee
The Honorable Emily Shetty

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: February 23, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 814 – *Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program*

Volvo Group Trucks, part of Volvo Group, is the last remaining major vehicle manufacturer in the State of Maryland following the closure of the General Motors manufacturing plant in Baltimore County in 2018. Volvo Group Trucks' impact on the Maryland economy cannot be understated: 4,645 direct and indirect jobs, \$250 million in labor income, and over \$36 million in additional state and local tax revenue have been directly or indirectly generated from Volvo Group operations in Washington County. Moreover, Volvo Group is proud to count over 1,100 of its employees as members of the Local UAW Union. Volvo Group North America supports House Bill 814.

House Bill 814 requires the Maryland Department of the Environment to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program. The certification program must (1) recognize businesses that operate in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and (2) provide consumers with a way to identify businesses that have been certified as green businesses. MDE must update and enhance the program established under the bill in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program.

Volvo Group Trucks in Hagerstown is part of the U.S. Department of Energy – Better Plants Challenge Program. Our initial commitment of 25% energy efficiency improvement by the end of 2020 was achieved five years early in 2015. Since then we have re-pledged for another 25% energy efficiency improvement by the end of 2025. In 2014, and again in 2017, and again in 2020, the Hagerstown facility received a Superior Energy Performance – Platinum certification. It has also set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to achieve improvements in Waste reduction, Energy consumption, Water consumption, and CO₂ emissions. In 2020, the plant introduced electromobility, assembling the modular power box for Mack and Volvo's new electric vehicles.

Moreover, Volvo Group Trucks in Hagerstown develops and produces the cleanest heavy-duty diesel engines in the world. Today, our engines focus on climate change, targeting Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Nitrous Oxide (N₂O), and Methane (CH₄) with CO₂ reduction being the

predominant objective. Meanwhile, the engines we produce are creating value for our customers by providing even greater fuel efficiency than anticipated.

As it relates to environmentally preferable purchasing, Volvo Group Trucks utilizes reusable/returnable shipping containers for component and unit transports. When it comes to solid waste reduction and reuse, we reduced total waste generated per unit by 24% between 2017 and 2019. Furthermore, in 2019, we recycled 6,538,236 lbs. of metals and 1,028,340 lbs. of cardboard and we began our journey to become landfill free. As it relates to energy efficiency, we continue to implement projects to reduce energy. We made a commitment to WWF, which we exceeded over a six year period, conserving in excess of 5 million kwh.

In short, Volvo Group Trucks urges the House Environment and Transportation Committee to give House Bill 814 a favorable report and looks forward to a time when it can receive a Maryland Green Business Certification.

For more information call:

Richard A. Tabuteau
347.886.2904

HB 0814 AIAMD Ltr of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Sandi Worthman

Position: FAV

7 February 2022

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

Re: Letter of Support for HB 0814
Statewide Green Business Certification Program

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

On behalf of AIA Maryland and the nearly 2,000 Architects we represent, we ask for your support of this bill to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program to recognize businesses operating in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and provide consumers with information on how to identify those businesses. This bill will update and enhance the existing statewide green business certification program.

The certification program will recognize businesses that operate in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and provide consumers with a way to identify businesses that have been certified as green businesses. Further, this bill will leverage the assets of the states existing Maryland Green Registry with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program which has been in place for 12 years

We support this bill to provide consumers including homeowners, small businesses and large businesses with tools to enable smart choices in the marketplace of goods and services. This bill will help everyone reduce and combat negative environmental impact as they shop and use our local businesses in our communities.

AIA Maryland and its membership care deeply about Maryland's built environment and we support this legislation to allow consumers to make educated decisions through the use of "green businesses" in our communities. AIA Maryland is glad to support this bill.

Sincerely,



Laurence A. Frank, AIA
Director, Past President

cc: Delegate Emily Shetty

LS22, HB814, CCAN Douglas testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Victoria Venable

Position: FAV

HB814 - Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program

Date: February 23, 2022

Committee: Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Favorable

Davonte Douglas, Maryland Policy Fellow - Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, I urge a favorable report from the committee on **HB814 - Statewide Green Business Certification Program**. As we move towards a greener future, Maryland needs to recognize businesses that are operating in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint.

The CCAN Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Chesapeake Climate Action Network, a grassroots organization dedicated exclusively to fighting for bold and just solutions to climate change in the Chesapeake region of Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC. We believe that the state government has a crucial role to play in mitigating climate change and should lead by example in all efforts to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. This is particularly important in the business sector, which supplies Maryland's goods and services.

HB814 builds off of the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program by establishing a statewide green certification program that would be available for all Maryland businesses. HB814 requires the MDE to:

- Establish and administer a voluntary green business certification program that would highlight businesses operating in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint.
- Inform consumers about how to identify green certified businesses.
- Update and enhance the statewide green business certification program in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program..

We believe that this bill is an important policy to incentivize Maryland businesses to improve their environmental footprint and provide Marylanders the information to be conscious consumers.

Thank you for your consideration of HB814. For all the reasons stated above, we urge a favorable vote from the committee.

February 23 HB0814 -- Environment – Statewide Gree

Uploaded by: Brian Levine

Position: FWA



House Bill 814 -- *Environment – Statewide Green Business Certification Program*
House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 23, 2022
Support with Amendments

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports as amended House Bill 814 -- *Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program*.

House Bill 814, as first drafted, requires the Maryland Department of the Environment to establish and administer a voluntary statewide green business certification program that recognizes businesses that reduce their environmental footprint and provides consumers with a way to identify certified green businesses. With proposed amendments, House Bill 814 would require the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center to conduct a study regarding the feasibility and potential value of enhancing the existing Maryland Green Registry to include a statewide green business certification program and an enhanced program that recognizes businesses that operate in a manner that maximizes triple bottom line benefits to the environment, economy, and society.

The bill would enhance Maryland's green business efforts by studying the creation of a program inspired by a successful entity already in place in Montgomery County. Montgomery County's Green Business Certification is a voluntary recognition program designed to encourage businesses and other organizations to take steps that reduce the ecological impact of their workplace. The program was created in 2009 through a partnership between the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, and Montgomery College.

A green business certification, and one that also offers businesses that operate in a manner that maximizes triple bottom line benefits to the environment, economy, and society, would provide a number of benefits. For businesses that wish to green their practices and reduce their ecological footprint, there would be an opportunity to do so and be recognized for these efforts. For businesses that also want to take that effort a step further by focusing on their economic and societal impact, House Bill 814, as amended, would provide for an opportunity to do that as well.

Generally, studying and eventually implementing a program that allows businesses, if they chose, to differentiate themselves in the marketplace through a commitment to sustainability and societal principles is good for Maryland's economy. Such a program would grow the ability for customers and other businesses to find workplaces that share their own principles for sustainability, societal, and economic practices.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports House Bill 814 with amendments and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

Brian Levine / Vice President of Government Affairs
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
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Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-738-0015 / www.mccc.md.com