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**BILL NO.:**            **SB 124**

**TITLE:**              Public Schools – Grant Program to Reduce and Compost  
School Waste

**SPONSOR:**        Senator Hettleman

**COMMITTEE:**    Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**POSITION:**       **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**             January 19, 2022

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** SB 124 - Public Schools – Grant Program to Reduce and Compost School Waste. This legislation would create a grant program incentivizing schools to reduce and compost food waste.

Food waste is a growing environmental concern with long-term implications for climate change, global health, and access to food around the world. Growing student populations throughout the State will continue to place higher demands on food availability and expand potential for food waste. This waste contributes to higher levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, takes up space in our landfills, and squanders the potential to use leftover nutrients to support enhanced food production. While it is in the interests of Baltimore County’s schools to reduce food waste, the costs of these programs are generally cost-prohibitive.

By providing grant funding for schools that engage in food waste education and reduction programs, SB 124 incentivizes policies which promote environmental and food health across the State. By reducing food waste on the front end, the grant program would achieve a dual purpose of addressing inequitable distribution of food, using composting to mitigate negative environmental impacts of any remaining waste. Incentivizing the reduction of waste first and then composting falls in line with the County’s sustainability goals as well. This bill would strengthen Baltimore County’s sustainability impacts while minimizing any fiscal impacts on its schools.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 124. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at [jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov).