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**HB 1239**

March 9, 2022

**TO:** Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Natasha Mehu, Director, Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 1239 – Environment – Plastic and Glass Products – Postconsumer Recycled Content Program

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 1239.

HB 1239 requires plastic and glass producers to meet a minimum percentage of recycled content in their products, particularly plastic carryout bags, plastic beverage containers, rigid plastic containers, plastic trash bags, and glass containers and products. The bill requires producers to register with the administering department and pay a registration fee to be collected and kept in a fund to provide grants to the counties to implement recycling plans.

The City of Baltimore supports HB 1239, as it aligns with the strategies for waste reduction outlined in the Less Waste, Better Baltimore (LWBB) operational plan. LWBB includes recommendations for mandated recycle content laws as well as product takeback programs, extended producer responsibility mandates, and disposal bans or surcharge fees, to list a few. Baltimore City recognizes that the requirement in this bill for recycled content in plastic and glass products is part of a larger need to change the legislative landscape around waste management in Maryland.

This bill will achieve the greatest benefit when combined with improvements in infrastructure and support staff levels for recycling collections and processing, in order to manage the increase in demand for recycled materials.

The Recycling Partnership has projected an increase in demand for post-consumer recycled content (PCR) in plastics packaging. A Recycling Partnership analysis, focusing on the prominent resin polyethylene terephthalate (PET), shows that there is an annual gap of more than

1 billion pounds between current U.S. supply and projected 2025 demand for recycled polyethylene terephthalate (RPET) for use in bottles. As a result, companies with significant dependence on U.S. RPET supply are destined to face challenges in meeting their recycled content targets unless strategic investments are made to address widespread national infrastructure gaps.

In summary, the City of Baltimore supports HB 1239 as well as additional efforts to manage and support the infrastructure required to supply the demand for recycled material.

For the above-stated reasons, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 1239.