



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 109 – Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling
and Waste Systems in Maryland**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Members of EEE:

Maryland’s recycling policy is guided by Maryland Recycling Act (MRA), which sets mandatory recycling rates for State government and local jurisdictions, as well as a voluntary statewide waste diversion goal of 60% and a voluntary statewide recycling goal of 55% by 2020. Each county and Baltimore City must recycle at least 20% or 35% of the jurisdiction’s solid waste stream (depending on population) and must submit a plan to the Maryland Department of Environment, as to how they will achieve that rate. The MRA sets allowable and not allowable recycling commodities.

When enacted in the 1980s, the MRA was one of the most progressive laws addressing recycling. Throughout the years, the legislature has added to the MRA, but we have not taken a step back and looked at it from a wholistic perspective. Are we counting the right things? That is, are the things we are counting towards the recycling rate materials whose collection will help the environment? Is the MRA aligned with the State’s recycling and greenhouse gas reduction goals?

HB 109 will bring together stakeholders from across the State: industry and environmentalists, counties large and small, municipalities, legislators, the Department of the Environment, and the Maryland Recycling Network; as well as those representing the perspectives of composting, environmental justice, and waste disposal, to update the MRA. The breadth and depth of experience, knowledge and vision represented on the task force will help move Maryland’s recycling system forward.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 109