



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary-Designee Serena McIlwain**

***Senate Bill 447
Anaerobic Digestion Workgroup***

Position: Support
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Date: February 15, 2023
From: Gabrielle Leach

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 447. The bill would require the convening of an Anaerobic Digestion Workgroup.

The purpose of the work group would be to:

1. study the current regulations regarding anaerobic digestion;
2. study the process of anaerobic digestion;
3. identify and examine categories of digestate produced during anaerobic digestion;
4. identify and examine appropriate uses to recycle the digestate produced during anaerobic digestion;
5. identify and examine options for incentivizing the use of the digestate produced during anaerobic digestion as agricultural fertilizer and manufactured topsoil;
6. identify the infrastructure needs for the responsible construction of an anaerobic digestion facility; and
7. make recommendations regarding the requirements for the responsible construction and operation of an anaerobic digestion facility.

The workgroup would include representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors as well as MDE, MDA, and MEA. After approximately a sixth month period, the workgroup would be required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly.

The findings from SB 447 could be a valuable resource for municipalities, private companies, and other organizations interested in, or already operating, anaerobic digesters. These findings could help organizations better understand the capital requirements/start-up costs as well as operational costs and maintenance required to operate an anaerobic digester. In addition to this, anaerobic digestion does count as recycling in Maryland, and can be an important tool to help counties meet their recycling obligations under the Maryland Recycling Act.

For the reasons detailed above, MDE urges a **FAVORABLE** report for Senate Bill 447.