



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

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Testimony in Support of HB 284 - Environment – Reducing Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility

TO: Chair Kumar Barve and the members of the Environment and Transportation Committee and Chair C.T. Wilson and the members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Phil Webster, PhD, Lead Advocate on Climate Change
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.
DATE: February 22, 2023

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports reducing packaging materials and urges approval and rapid implementation of **HB 284 - Environment – Reducing Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility**.

The UULM-MD is a faith-based advocacy organization based on the Principles of Unitarian Universalism. Two Principles are particularly relevant. The Second Principle, *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations* and the Seventh Principle, *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*.

We believe in *justice, equity and compassion in human relations*. We know that Global Climate Change impacts marginalized communities first and worse; because the manufacture of plastics is disproportionately located IN their communities. Consequently, these communities suffer from higher rates of cancer and other debilitating health issues. How can there be justice and equity if one part of society is reaping in the benefits, while another is paying all of the costs?

We believe that we should all have *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*. We also know that the manufacture of plastics is a large and growing use of fossil fuels, increasing Greenhouse Gasses leading to increasing global temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of severe weather and sea level rise. Maryland is particularly susceptible to loss of coastal line due to sea level rise and agricultural land due to salt intrusion, so being proactive is in our best interest.

We strongly support reducing the use of unhealthy, polluting and carbon emitting fossil fuels in the manufacture of packaging materials. This bill incentivizes producers to use less plastics and increase their recyclability.

Please keep us on the right and moral path towards a livable climate and a sustainable world. We owe it to our children.

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