



February 20, 2023

To: Maryland House Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters Committee
Re: HB 109 Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling and Waste Systems in Maryland

The Maryland Recycling Network promotes sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's") of materials otherwise destined for disposal and the purchase of products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through education programs, advocacy activities to affect public policy, technical assistance efforts, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

Our members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

HB 109: Creation of a Task Force to Modernize the Maryland Recycling Act

We support HB 109.

The Maryland Recycling Network (MRN) enthusiastically supports House Bill 109, sponsored by Delegate Sara Love. HB 109 calls for the creation of a Task Force consisting of 21 key stakeholders from throughout the state to review the Maryland Recycling Act and study Maryland's recycling and waste systems. It will then make recommendations on updating the Act to improve waste and recycling in Maryland.

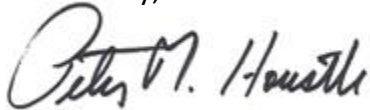
Careful review of the Maryland Recycling Act, enacted in 1988, is most appropriate given the passage of 35 years. Recycling has changed so much since then. The first single stream curbside collection started in Seattle that year. Plastic recycling was beginning, starting with PET soft drink bottles and HDPE plastic milk jugs. Newspaper collection at the curbside was common but collecting cardboard boxes was rare and mixed paper inconceivable. Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs) were primitive compared to today's marvels of engineering.

So of course, the Act should be updated to embody the best of environmental objectives and to improve how Maryland's local governments manage recycling and waste. We have learned so much over these 35 years. Let's profit from that learning!

The Maryland Recycling Network stands ready to serve as a sounding board and resource for legislators and others interested in pursuing our mission. Please do not hesitate to contact me via email phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the above.

We look forward to working with you to continue the strides we have all made to improve Maryland's recycling programs in a time- and cost-effective manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter M. Houstle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter M. Houstle
Executive Director