



March 7, 2023

2023 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
SBo782: State Procurement for Soil Amendments

BILL: SBo782: State Procurement - Purchasing Preferences - Compost, Mulch, and Soil Amendments and Recycled Aggregate

COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation

POSITION: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0782

BILL ANALYSIS: Requiring each unit of State government to give preference to certain products produced from recycled or organic materials when purchasing compost, mulch, and other soil amendments or recycled aggregate.

Dear Chair Guzzone and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

The Montgomery County Food Council (MCFC) urges you to **SUPPORT** this bill to require units within State governments to give preference to compost, mulch, and other soil amendments that come from recycled or organic materials.

Through this bill the State of Maryland will be able to promote procurement of soil amendments that come from organic and recycled materials. This will promote the recycling and composting of organic materials by strengthening the market for the materials. To maintain competitive pricing, the material will be given preference if the price is not more than 10% above the price of a comparable material produced from non-organic or recycled materials.

In 2022, the Montgomery County Food Council's Environmental Impact Working Group hosted a Symposium, *Food System Strategies to Address Climate Change*. Main findings from a year of research included recommendations to prevent food waste and expand diversified composting, including on-farm composting of food scraps. This affirmative procurement policy will build markets for recycled food waste and could help compost producers, like farmers, find markets. Promoting composting and recycling of organic materials benefits the environment and economy. Cycling nutrients and enhancing soil health and resilience will become increasingly vital as the impacts of climate change become more direct. Through this legislation, steps can be taken to ensure the promotion of a healthier environment, while also supporting local businesses and State-owned public lands.



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This legislation will support local farmers, value-added agriculture, and create more opportunities for success for our Maryland agricultural economy. **For these reasons, the Montgomery County Food Council supports SBo782 and urges a FAVORABLE REPORT for this bill.**

The Montgomery County Food Council is a nonprofit organization that serves as the primary connection point for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, and residents around food system issues in our County. We bring together over 2,000 local and regional partners in community-wide education, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives. Our work cultivates a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable local food system by enhancing food access for the over 100,000 at risk for hunger, expanding food education opportunities for all residents, supporting our County's farms and food and beverage businesses, and addressing the impact of local food production, distribution, consumption and recycling on our natural resources

For more information, please contact Massa Cressall, Interim Executive Director, at the email and phone number below.



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