



March 8, 2023

**2023 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
HB1139: Solid Waste Disposal and Diversion**

BILL: HB1139: Solid Waste Disposal and Diversion and On-Farm Composting and Compost Use

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: Testimony in Support of House Bill 1139

BILL ANALYSIS: Establishing the On-Farm Composting and Compost Use Grant Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund; establishing a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge to be collected by owners and operators of refuse disposal systems and requiring that the surcharge revenue be remitted on a quarterly basis, to the Comptroller; establishing the Waste Reduction Grants Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund; authoring the Department of Environment to approve a certain local solid waste disposal surcharge program.

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

The Montgomery County Food Council (MCFC) urges you to **SUPPORT** this bill to establish the On-Farm Composting and Compost Use Grant Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund, as well as a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge, and the Waste Reduction Grants Fund.

In order to address the impending threats associated with climate change there is a need for investments in new solutions around many public service sectors. HB1139 would invest in new programs to complement existing state policies on food waste and healthy soils, as well as support local solutions and innovations to address waste issues. Dedicated funding for on-farm composting and compost use will also support Maryland farmers and enhance soil quality and food system resilience.

Through the establishment of these grant programs the State will be able to support programs that enable waste prevention, since the most effective way to reduce issues associated with waste is to create less waste. These grant funds will also strengthen the power of reuse programs and support food rescue activities, and support recycling and composting of food scraps to be able to add vital nutrients back into the soil. Composting has proven to be beneficial for the environment but also has social and economic benefits, and can be a means to create new jobs. Montgomery County, and Maryland as a whole, have many composting efforts underway, and this grant funding would help



P.O. Box 32212 | Bethesda, MD 20814 | 310-637-7071
mocofoodcouncil.org | info@mocofoodcouncil.org

programs to be able to continue and expand operations.

This legislation will promote composting within the State of Maryland and will increase the efforts to divert useful materials from landfills and support local communities through maximizing the use of resources, reducing pollution, and improving the economy . **For these reasons, the Montgomery County Food Council supports HB1139 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.



P.O. Box 32212 | Bethesda, MD 20814 | 310-637-7071
mocofoodcouncil.org | info@mocofoodcouncil.org