



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

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**HB 609**

February 22, 2023

**TO:** Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee  
**FROM:** Mayor Brandon M. Scott, City of Baltimore  
**RE:** House Bill 609 – Environment – Waste Haulers – Reporting Requirements

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill 609.

House Bill 609 would require certain waste haulers to submit a report on waste disposal activities to a certain county in a certain manner on or before March 1, 2024 and every March 1<sup>st</sup> thereafter; establish a certain penalty for a violation of this Act; provide for the enforcement of this Act and the distribution of certain penalties; and generally relating to reporting requirements for waste haulers.

Each county must submit to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) an annual Maryland Recycling Act (MRA) Tonnage Reporting Survey, which details the quantity of materials generated in the public and private sectors that are recycled and diverted from the solid waste stream each year. The amount of public and private waste generated within or brought into a county is the baseline tonnage that MDE uses to calculate a county's recycling rate. The more data a county has on diverted or recycled waste materials, the higher the calculated recycling rate. However, many jurisdictions aren't reaching the State-mandated recycling goals because businesses, multi-family dwellings and office buildings are not reporting on their recycling activities, even if they are required by law to recycle. For Baltimore City, staff currently attempt to track down private sector recycling data which involves persistent outreach via multiple communication channels. Despite the effort dedicated to outreach each year, the City only receives a small fraction of completed forms. This legislative request would make it mandatory for waste, recycling, and organic waste haulers in the State of Maryland to report the types, quantities, and destinations of materials that were disposed of, sold or transferred to the appropriate county government on an annual basis.

Getting this data directly from haulers, who typically are tracking tonnages for billing purposes, would result in a significantly improved and more accurate accounting of recycling, diversion and reporting rates for every county. Requiring haulers to report their waste, recycling, and organics diversion tonnages is a small but impactful step these haulers could take to help Baltimore City and other counties more accurately report recycling and diversion activities, as well as reach their recycling goals. In addition, many haulers are already required to report their hauling tonnages to some of the State's counties. Montgomery County, for example, passed a regulation similar to HB609 requirements in 2013 and now has one of the highest MRA rates in the State. They

require haulers to report bi-annually, and non-compliance constitutes county code violations starting at \$150 per day.

Overall, this reporting mandate will improve the ability of counties to accurately track and report on their entire solid waste stream, helping the State reach its MRA goals, but also developing a detailed understanding of organics hauling and recycling participation across the private sector. This data could be leveraged to help local governments identify where recycling and diversion activities need to be better supported, and what additional services or infrastructural developments are needed to reach State and local sustainability goals.

It is for the reasons stated above that I respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 609.