



SB782 – State Procurement – Purchasing Preferences – Compost, Mulch, and Soil 3 Amendments and Recycled Aggregate

Testimony before

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

March 07, 2023

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Peter Alexander and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in **support of SB782 with amendments**. We appreciate the leadership of Senator Hester in sponsoring this important legislation.

SB782 will require each unit of State government which maintains public land to give preference to the procurement and use of certain products produced from recycled or organic materials when purchasing compost, mulch, or other soil amendments, or recycled aggregate.

Composting is an important way to reduce landfill use while reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from organic wastes in landfills. By requiring compost to be used as a fertilizer rather than chemical fertilizers, a market is created for that compost and chemical applications can be reduced.

Further, this bill would give preference to the purchasing of several landscaping products from recycled sources, including municipal solid waste, food waste, sludge, yard waste, clean wood waste, and other recycled organic materials, along with recycled aggregate. However, sewage sludge has been an identified source of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination on farmland, and therefore we are concerned about encouraging its use in state projects.

We support the use of all these recycled source materials with the ***notable exception of sludge*** which can be contaminated with PFAS.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report with the amendment to delete sludge from the list.

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