



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0056
FOOD WASTE AND SOLID WASTE REDUCTION – GRANTS, FUND, AND
SURCHARGE**

Bill Sponsor: Senator Hester

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0056 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Food waste is a growing problem in our state. It comprises a quarter of the trash that we throw in landfills and creates additional greenhouse gases as it breaks down. Additionally, given the number of Marylanders going hungry, it seems that keeping as much food waste out of landfills as possible is an important goal.

This bill, if enacted, would divert as much food as possible from landfills, by supporting on-farm composting, invest in cold storage facilities that would ensure that more unused food gets distributed to food banks, and establishes a program that would encourage more upcycling and remanufacture of materials that would otherwise end up in landfills.

This program would be funded by a solid waste surcharge and the use of other state and federal funds.

Our members appreciate the effort to get in front of this growing problem with real solutions. Trash, and especially food waste are problems that we can't kick down the road.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.