



Senate Bill 686

Environment - Extended Producer Responsibility for Batteries and Battery-Containing Products (Battery Stewardship Act)

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

Date: February 18, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 686 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill creates a framework to establish more robust battery recycling infrastructure in Maryland, recognizing the significant safety and health concerns of those items remaining principally landfill material.

As policy makers continue the push toward electrification, Maryland residents will be purchasing an increasing number of electronics, most of those powered by some type of battery. Already, most household devices are powered by batteries and when they reach the end of their lifespan, they are often disposed of, potentially creating dangerous situations for communities and county-operated infrastructure. SB 686 seeks to reduce waste and make communities safer by establishing a producer-driven entity focused on either creating or supporting existing battery recycling infrastructure. Importantly, counties that function as both collectors and recyclers will be eligible to receive reimbursement for both services, extending the capacity of local programs and providing more flexibility to local tax dollars.

Counties thank both the advocates and the sponsors for proposing a plan to strengthen battery recycling and retain local autonomy. Counties offer the following amendment to ensure that facilities that collect and recycle batteries have adequate fire suppression technology installed:

On page 11, after line 29, insert,

**“(11) ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ADEQUATE
FIRE SUPPRESSION TECHNOLOGY WITHIN THE APPROPRIATE POINTS OF
THE BATTERY RECYCLING STREAM, INCLUDING AT COLLECTION AND
OTHER RELEVANT FACILITIES.”.**

SB 686 marks an important step in fortifying Maryland’s battery recycling infrastructure. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to issue SB 686 a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report.