



Bill: SB591 - Environment - Covered Electronic Device Recycling Program - Establishment (Electronics Recycling Health and Safety Modernization Act)

Date: February 18, 2025

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

We enthusiastically support the goal of overhauling and modernizing Maryland's electronic recycling program and we greatly appreciate the leadership of the sponsor in this regard.

Trash Free Maryland supports SB591, which updates the current electronics recycling program and provides sustainable funding to local government electronics recycling programs. This removes some of the financial burden from jurisdictions for safely managing the growing quantities of used electronics. Importantly, this bill also establishes a flexible framework to consider future electronics recycling needs and establishes an advisory body to support informed analysis and recommendations for continuous improvements, including eventual targets for convenience and access to drop-off, mailback, and curbside electronics pickup for electronic devices that are no longer wanted or functional.

At present, many Marylanders live outside of jurisdictions that are able to provide free electronics drop-off programs to residents. Without accessible electronics recycling options, some electronics may be mismanaged - disposed or dumped - rather than recycled. Improper management of electronic devices poses environmental and fire safety risks, endangers workers in our waste and recycling programs, and also means valuable materials and components are destroyed or lost rather than recirculated in the economy.

We are pleased to see that the cost for administration and program oversight will be shifted from the public sector to the manufacturers (via the covered electronic device manufacturer registration fee account). We would like to see this concept expanded – perhaps by tasking the advisory committee with studying and making recommendations for future consideration of how the state could implement electronics producer responsibility concepts that will help shift some of the costs for recycling from consumers upstream to producers to incentivize environmental considerations in product design – especially since many electronic products become obsolete through no choice made by consumers.

We thank everyone involved in this effort for taking the initiative to begin the badly needed update of the electronic recycling program in Maryland

We respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB591.

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