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**National Waste  
& Recycling Association<sup>SM</sup>**

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 18, 2025

Senate Bill 686 – *Environment – Extended Producer Responsibility for Batteries and Battery-Containing Products (Battery Stewardship Act)*

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

The Maryland chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association (NWRA-MD) is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in the State of Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. NWRA-MD and its members submit this letter of information on Senate Bill 686.

NWRA-MD and its members support extended producer responsibility (EPR) for hard-to-manage items, including batteries. Batteries in the waste stream pose serious safety hazards for waste and recycling companies. Lithium-ion batteries, in particular, can spark fires when damaged or improperly disposed of, endangering workers and facilities. These fires are difficult to control and have caused millions of dollars in damages. Additionally, leaking batteries release toxic chemicals, creating environmental and health risks. Proper disposal through designated battery recycling programs is essential to prevent these dangers.

We supported *House Bill 468/Senate Bill 532* from the 2024 Legislative Session to create a Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland. NWRA-MD was included in the membership of this Commission, and we have been actively engaged in discussions about how to better manage batteries in the waste stream and reduce fire hazards, which are particularly hazardous to our workers on hauling vehicles and in our facilities. The Commission has created a “Prevent, Detect and Suppress Fires at Recycling Facilities” subcommittee. As required under the bill, the Commission submitted an interim report in December 2024 on its progress so far. A final report is due on or before December 1, 2025. We expect the final report to contain recommendations on managing batteries in the waste stream. While we support EPR for batteries, we suggest waiting for the Commission's final report before adopting legislation on this topic may be prudent. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

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