

February 14, 2025

**To: Maryland Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee**

**Re: SB0686: Environment - Extended Producer Responsibility for Batteries and Battery-Containing Products (Battery Stewardship Act)**

**Favorable with Amendment**

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) appreciates the opportunity to support **SB0686**. SWANA is an organization of 10,000 public and private sector professionals committed to advancing from solid waste management to resource management through a shared emphasis on education, advocacy, and research. Our members include the individuals collecting and transferring materials, running recycling facilities, managing landfills, providing residential recycling services and outreach, and overseeing solid waste departments, among many other job functions throughout the industry.

SWANA's first strategic goal is to make the industry safer, and our strategic plan specifically includes the need to address lithium-ion batteries, as they are a growing safety risk for workers in the industry. Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries have been increasingly common as consumers mistakenly discard a variety of electronics in household trash or recycling. The SWANA Lithium-Ion Battery Workgroup is coordinating on creating resources focused on safety, advocacy, and consumer-facing education. SB0686 will help mitigate this risk by allowing consumers to have options for proper recycling.

In January 2025, SWANA and the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) released a [joint policy statement](https://swana.org/news/swana-news-archive/article/2025/01/14/NWRA-and-SWANA-Partner-to-Address-Lithium-Ion-Battery-Disposal-Challenges) on the critical issue of proper lithium-ion battery disposal and the threat to the waste and resource management industry (<https://swana.org/news/swana-news-archive/article/2025/01/14/NWRA-and-SWANA-Partner-to-Address-Lithium-Ion-Battery-Disposal-Challenges>). In addition, SWANA and UL Standards & Engagement published an [op-ed](https://www.recyclingtoday.com/news/battery-fires-threaten-waste-management-workforce-clean-energy-transition/) citing the need for proper battery collection and recycling (<https://www.recyclingtoday.com/news/battery-fires-threaten-waste-management-workforce-clean-energy-transition/>).

Municipalities often bear the cost of collecting and disposing of batteries. Many of SWANA's public sector members often speak of the challenges of the increasing cost obligations to manage their waste and recycling operations. A county or city may not be able to provide convenient and accessible battery recycling options to residents within their limited budgets.

The Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland (House Bill 468/Ch. 950, 2024 and SB 532/Ch. 949, 2024) is currently working on recommendations to comprehensively address the challenges of lithium-ion battery collection, recycling, and safety in Maryland. SWANA recommends that SB0686 recognize the work of the Commission, give the Commission time to complete its final report, which is due December 2025 and will include policy best practices, and that it incorporate the recommendations of that report.



If you have any questions about these comments, or about SWANA, please contact Kristyn Oldendorf, SWANA's Director of Public Policy, at [koldendorf@swana.org](mailto:koldendorf@swana.org) or 240-494-2237.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this bill and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Kristyn Oldendorf*

Kristyn Oldendorf  
Senior Director of Public Policy and Communications  
Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)

