



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support of SB 901 - Environment - Packaging Materials - Producer Responsibility Plans

TO: Chair Feldman and the members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Phil Webster, PhD, Lead Advocate on Climate Change
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.
DATE: February 18, 2025

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports increasing the amount of post consumer content in recycled products and urges approval and rapid implementation of **SB 901-Environment-Packaging Materials-Producer Responsibility- Plans**.

The UULM-MD is a faith-based advocacy organization based on Unitarian Universalist Values, including justice, equity, and interdependence. Working to mitigate, adapt to, and build resilience for climate change is central to our beliefs.

We believe in *justice and equity*. We know that Global Climate Change impacts marginalized communities first and worse; because the manufacture of plastics is disproportionately located IN their communities. Consequently, these communities suffer from higher rates of cancer and other debilitating health issues. Waste facilities are often located in marginalized communities, this bill would reduce the amount of plastic in the waste stream.

How can there be justice and equity if one part of society is reaping in the benefits, while another is paying all of the costs?

We believe that we should all have *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*. Increasing the amount of plastics that are recycled will reduce the manufacture of plastics. Creating new plastic is a large and growing use of fossil fuels, increasing Greenhouse Gasses, which leads to increasing global temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of severe weather, and sea level rise. Being proactive is in our best interest. Maryland is particularly susceptible to loss of coastal line due to sea level rise as well as agricultural land due to salt intrusion.

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We strongly support increasing recycling post consumer plastics thereby reducing unhealthy, polluting and carbon emitting fossil fuels in the manufacture of plastics. This bill would move Maryland toward a waste free economy.

Please keep us on the right and moral path towards a livable climate and a sustainable world.

We owe it to our children.

Phil Webster, PhD

Lead Advocate on Climate Change

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