

Maryland-Delaware Solid Waste Association

a chapter of the



Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 11, 2025

*Senate Bill 134 – Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion
Fund and Grant Programs – Established***POSITION: OPPOSE**

The Maryland chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association (NWRA) 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 and its members oppose Senate Bill 134.

Senate Bill 134 proposes establishing an On-Farm Organic Diversion and Recycling Grant Program funded by establishing a new solid waste disposal surcharge on the final disposition of solid waste in the State. The solid waste disposal surcharge will impose a surcharge of \$2 per ton of solid waste processed by a refuse disposal system. The surcharge must also be adjusted every two years after establishment in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for the Mid-Atlantic Division and gives the Maryland Department of the Environment the authority to evaluate the surcharge to determine whether it should be increased.

NWRA does not object to the intent of this legislation, which is to identify ways to offset the costs of developing and implementing on-farm composting and compost use, food waste prevention, and food rescue projects. However, we do not believe the proposed surcharge is the proper funding mechanism for this worthy goal. Our members in the waste disposal business are simply managing waste after it is generated. In many cases, we are providing this service on behalf of county or municipal governments. The proposed surcharge does not account for food waste producers and focuses only on the end-of-life waste management sector. In designing a funding solution for food waste diversion programs, we feel that food waste producers should be a part of the solution. Additionally, any new solid waste disposal surcharge will most likely be passed on to the producers of solid waste, meaning nearly every household and business in Maryland would have higher charges for waste disposal. At a time when household budgets are being squeezed by inflation and other economic pressures, legislation resulting in higher waste disposal costs is not prudent. In addition to increased costs for consumers, this legislation would also increase costs for local governments. This surcharge would apply equally to the public and private refuse disposal systems. Local governments are already struggling financially to provide essential public services. A new cost in the form of a surcharge would place another burden on local governments and taxpayers.

We encourage the Committee to look at alternative funding sources for on-farm organics and recycling grant programs. The proposed surcharge will lead to higher costs for Maryland businesses, consumers, and local governments during a time of economic strain and increased operating costs. Unless and until these concerns about the surcharge area are addressed, we request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 134.

For more information:

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