



Senate Bill 901

Environment – Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility Plans

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

Date: February 18, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 901 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill creates a framework to establish more robust recycling infrastructure for packaging materials in Maryland.

One of the most heavily produced items in the world is packaging materials. The world's consumer-focused economy relies on the purchasing of goods, and those goods need to be protected from the factory to their final destination in our homes. However, this protection comes at a cost, and can generate a large amount of materials. SB 901 seeks to reduce waste and make communities healthier by establishing a producer-driven entity focused on either creating or supporting existing packing material recycling infrastructure. Importantly, counties that function as both collectors and recyclers will be eligible to receive reimbursement for both services, extending the capacity of local programs and providing more flexibility to local tax dollars.

Counties thank both the advocates and the sponsors for proposing a plan that both strengthens Maryland's recycling and retains local autonomy. Counties do have some concerns with unintended consequences of the legislation as drafted, and offer an amendment to help smooth implementation locally:

Amendment #1

On page 29, strike lines 22-25 in their entirety.

Counties would not be able to implement this detailed planning requirement both in the form as drafted and in the timeline prescribed. Some counties estimate that this type of an analysis would likely create an unfunded mandate of several hundred thousand to over a million dollars depending on the jurisdiction and the scope of their recycling infrastructure. Additionally, counties track recycling inputs by the underlying raw materials, not the initial intended use of the product. The envisioned program does not require this full analysis.

SB 901 marks an important step in fortifying Maryland's recycling infrastructure. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 901 a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report.