



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

Senate Bill 134

***Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and
Grant Programs - Established***

Position: Support

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Date: February 11, 2025

From: Leslie Gray, Government Relations Officer

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** SB 134.

This bill would establish a \$2/ton surcharge on material managed through a refuse disposal system for final disposal. The anticipated revenue generated from this bill is expected to be \$14.4 million which could fund several programs including the On-Farm Organics Diversion and Recycling Grant Program, the Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Program, and the County Wasted Food Block Grant Program, in addition to certain administrative costs for MDE and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA).

MDE supports SB 134 as it would help create a reasonable surcharge at refuse disposal systems to help establish grants for organics recycling infrastructure. According to a 2016 Waste Characterization Study conducted in the State of Maryland, approximately 18% of Maryland's waste stream consists of food residuals, making it the State's most prominent waste stream. This bill will provide the grant funding necessary to help scale organics recycling in the State through a significant investment in organics recycling infrastructure. Currently, Maryland has both limited landfill capacity and limited space for additional landfills.

SB 134 would greatly assist the State with its waste diversion goals, and help protect Maryland citizens from the increased costs of waste transport for disposal outside of Maryland and the potential cost of new landfills.

In conclusion, MDE urges a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 134.

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