

**HB0338\_DNR\_SUP\_EEE\_3-25-25.pdf**

Uploaded by: Emily Wilson

Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

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March 25, 2025

**BILL NUMBER: House Bill 338 – Third Reader**

**SHORT TITLE: State Buildings and State Highways - Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT**

### **EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION**

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This legislation serves to improve the disposal methods of recyclable yard waste generated in the course of gardening, landscaping, and tree trimming activities occurring on the grounds of state facilities through the prohibition of single-use plastic containers for such purposes. It also requires that yard waste collected on the grounds of a state building or state highway be disposed of at in-state organics recycling facilities, natural wood waste recycling facilities, or state facilities with the on-site capacity to create mulch or soil amendments. The Department of Natural Resources supports this effort.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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Disposing of organic plant waste such as leaves, garden waste, lawn cuttings, weeds, and prunings in single-use plastic containers is generally poor practice in that plastic does not decompose at the same rate as yard waste and prevents effective composting of organic material.

### **BILL EXPLANATION**

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This bill would prohibit a person from disposing of yard waste collected on the grounds of a State building or State highway in a certain container; require a person to collect yard waste on the grounds of a State building or State highway in a certain container; require all yard waste collected on the grounds of a State building or State highway to be disposed of in a certain manner, provides an exemption for noxious weeds or invasive species; and generally relates to the collection and disposal of yard waste on the grounds of State buildings and State highways.

Contact: Emily Wilson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services (Acting)  
emilyh.wilson@maryland.gov ♦ 410-260-8426 (office) ♦ 443-223-1176 (cell)

**MDE HB338 SUP EEE.pdf**

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Position: FAV



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

***House Bill 338***

***State Buildings and State Highways - Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste***

**Position:** Support  
**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**Date:** March 25, 2025  
**From:** Leslie Gray, Government Relations Officer

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The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** HB 338.

**Bill Summary**

The bill would prevent a person from disposing of yard waste collected on the grounds of a state building or state highway in a single-use plastic container. The bill would also require a person collecting yard waste on the grounds of a state building or highway to do so in a container that will not be discarded with the yard waste or is compostable.

**Position Rationale**

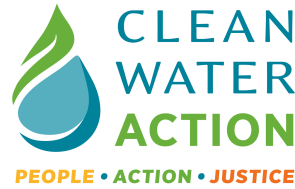
Requiring that yard waste be collected in a container that will not be discarded with the yard waste or is compostable can save organic recyclers time and money because they will not have to debug the waste during processing. MDE anticipates that this will help promote the additional diversion of yard waste and encourage local governments to adopt similar policies.

For the reasons detailed above MDE asks for a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 338.

# **HB338\_FAV\_TrashFreeMD\_EEE\_SignOn.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kelly Doordan

Position: FAV



## **HB 338 State Buildings and State Highways - Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste**

**Senate Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**Hearing Date:** March 25, 2025

**Position:** Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

HB338 prohibits the disposal of yard waste collected from the grounds of a state building or state highway in a single-use plastic container, and it requires state yard waste to be sent to organics recycling or mulching facilities if facilities with adequate receiving capacity are located within a 30-mile radius.

We enthusiastically support the goals of reducing plastic waste and supporting a transition away from single-use plastic. This bill's requirement to collect yard waste in a container that is not disposed of with the yard waste or that is a compostable paper bag will make it easier and more efficient to recycle organic materials. This will help further diversion of yard waste from disposal, prevent contamination of organic materials, and support Maryland's recycling and diversion goals.

Prohibiting the collection and disposal of yard waste in single-use plastic containers also helps the state set a visible example to educate and support wider adoption of similar policies to transition away from single-use plastic use in local jurisdictions.

**For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB338.**

Contact: Kelly Doordan ([kelly@trashfreemaryland.org](mailto:kelly@trashfreemaryland.org)), Executive Director, Trash Free Maryland

Trash Free Maryland

Blue Water Baltimore

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

National Aquarium

Clean Water Action

Little Falls Watershed Alliance

**MRN2025 HB 338SenWritten (003).pdf**

Uploaded by: Kitty McIlroy

Position: FAV



**March 21, 2025**

**To: Maryland Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**  
**Re: HB 338 State Buildings & State Highways – Collection and Disposal of Yard Waste Support**

Maryland Recycling Network members are public and private sectors recyclers and recycling advocates. Our members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We promote sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's") of materials otherwise destined for disposal and the purchase of products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through educational programs, advocacy, technical assistance, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

We support HB 338

Yard "waste" such as leaves, grass and branches, is commonly collected for composting by local governments throughout Maryland. In fact, MDE's most recent waste and recycling report showed 353,044 tons were collected and managed at 21 permitted composting facilities operating in 11 Maryland counties. This is a tremendous success story. Adding yard waste collected from state-owned properties, including highways, will only add to our success. Throughout our state we are creating a usable lawn product and avoiding disposal of methane producing organic material. This is a win for Maryland's environment!

We thank Delegate Lehman for introducing this bill and urge its speedy passage.

The Maryland Recycling Network is a resource for legislators and others interested in recycling and waste reduction. Contact us at [phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org](mailto:phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org), or 301-725-2508, or MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044, if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

Kitty McIlroy  
President, Maryland Recycling Network



**HB338 YARD WASTE LEHMAN SENATE TESTIMONY.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV

DELEGATE MARY A. LEHMAN

*Legislative District 21*

Prince George's and  
Anne Arundel Counties

Environment and Transportation  
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates

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## THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

### **HB 338**

### **State Lands Collection of Yard Waste**

**March 25, 2025**

### **Support**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

I am asking for your favorable report for HB 338, a bill that prohibits both state employees and contractors from using single-use plastic bags for yard waste when working on state lands and along state highways. The House passed this bill in both 2024 and 2025. It was not voted on last year by the Senate Education, Energy and Education Committee.

This year's bill also requires the yard waste, whether bagged or unbagged, to be disposed of at an organics recycling or a natural wood recycling facility. The Department of Environment has confirmed that these facilities have capacity for the disposal of this waste. The House Environment and Transportation Committee amended the bill to make an exemption when there is no organics recycling or natural wood recycling facility within thirty miles of where the yard waste is collected.

Instead of single-use plastic bags, the bill requires that state employees and contractors to either use a compostable container, such as a brown paper yard waste bag, or a container that will not be discarded with the yard waste, e.g., a reusable container. Under current Maryland law, there are no restrictions on the employment of single-use plastic containers for yard waste collection on the grounds of state buildings and along state highways.

Another change to this year's bill provides an exemption for the use of plastic bags for the removal of noxious weeds and invasive species. The Department of Natural Resources sometimes uses black plastic bags to kill these plants, once they have been removed.

HB 338 ensures that yard waste collected on state lands and along state highways is disposed of in a more environmentally conscious manner. When single-use plastic bags are used, the collected yard waste, along with the plastic bag, frequently ends up in landfill. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the bags then take up to twenty years to break down.<sup>1</sup> If it goes to a composting facility, the plastic bags are often shredded along with the yard waste. The issue of the disintegrating plastic forces the composting facilities to either invest in imperfect plastic-screening technology, which adds both time and cost to an already slow and expensive process, or to simply produce a contaminated product.

To date, over one third of Maryland's counties have enacted similar policies for residential yard waste pickup. It is time for the state to operate under the same standards.

Thank you and I urge a favorable report.

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<sup>1</sup> World Wildlife Fund, "The Lifecycle of Plastics," July 1, 2021

# **HB0338 crossfile FWA - State Buildings and State H**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FWA

HB0338\_RichardKaplowitz\_FWA

03/24/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON BILL HB#/0338 – FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

**State Buildings and State Highways - Collection of Yard Waste**

**TO:** Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support with its amendments of HB0338, State Buildings and State Highways - Collection of Yard Waste**

The House version of bill HB0338 passed 100-37 with amendments on 02/17/25. There was no cross-filed Senate bill. Please reconcile and pass this important bill and send it to the House for action.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report with its amendments and pass HB0338.**