



January 27, 2025

Delegate Boyce and Senator Hester Maryland General Assembly Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Delegate Boyce, Senator Hester, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Go Green OC in Ocean City, Maryland, I am writing to express our strong support for HB42/SB134—the Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund and Grant Programs Bill. This legislation represents a critical step forward in addressing food waste, a pressing issue with profound environmental, economic, and social implications.

As an organization dedicated to transforming Ocean City into the first zero-waste resort town in the United States, we have firsthand experience with the challenges and opportunities associated with food waste reduction and diversion. Over the past several years, our efforts have included launching the largest composting operation on Maryland's Eastern Shore (nearing 1 million pounds), supporting local businesses in adopting sustainable practices, and educating our community on the importance of waste reduction.

The passage of HB42/SB134 would be transformative for organizations like ours. The establishment of the Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Fund would provide critical resources to:

- **Expand Infrastructure:** Grant funding would enable us to increase the capacity of our composting operations, allowing us to divert more food waste from landfills and transform it into valuable compost for local farmers and gardeners.
- **Support Local Businesses:** Many small businesses in Ocean City are eager to reduce food waste but lack the resources to implement sustainable systems. This funding would empower us to provide these businesses with the tools and education they need to succeed. Importantly, contrary to past fiscal notes suggesting a high impact on small businesses, our experience shows that businesses are not only willing but eager to adopt composting and recycling practices. These practices often lead to cost savings by reducing disposal fees and creating opportunities to repurpose waste.
- **Educate the Community:** The bill's emphasis on education aligns perfectly with our mission to inspire long-term cultural change. With additional resources, we could expand

our outreach efforts, reaching more schools, restaurants, hospitals and residents with practical solutions to reduce food waste.

The disposal surcharge proposed in this bill is a fair and necessary funding mechanism. At a nominal cost, this fee will generate over \$14 million annually—a reliable source of revenue that will save Maryland taxpayers money by reducing the rising costs of waste disposal. Furthermore, this funding is urgently needed to address Maryland’s waste challenges in a way that benefits the environment, strengthens local economies, and fosters community resilience.

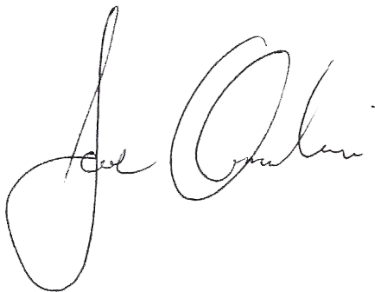
Restaurants and small businesses in Maryland want to compost and recycle, and many are already taking steps to do so. With the support provided by this bill, they can expand their efforts, ultimately benefiting both their bottom lines and the environment. This is a win-win scenario for Maryland businesses and communities alike.

We urge you to support HB42/SB134 and help make Maryland a leader in food waste reduction and diversion. Go Green OC and the Hobbit Restaurant stand ready to collaborate with you and other stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of this legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to creating a more sustainable future for Maryland.

Sincerely,

Josh Chamberlain

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Chamberlain". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

Founder, Go Green OC

310-694-7632