marylandnonprofits.org

February 26, 2025

Testimony on House Bill 931
Electronics Recycling Health and Safety Modernization Act
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is the statewide association representing nonprofit organizations and institutions in every county in Maryland. We urge you to support House bill 931 to update Maryland's existing code to provide increased funding for collection, recycling, refurbishment, and reuse of covered electronic devices.

House Bill 931 creates a program to be administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment, financed through exiting registration fees paid by manufacturers and a new recycling assessment added to the price of new electronic devices.

Disposal of electronic devices, including computers, computer monitors, televisions, tablets, cell phones, scanners, and copiers can pose significant environmental and public health risks. Cathode ray tubes (CRTs), glass tubes, and flat screen televisions and computer monitors contain mercury, lead, and flame-retardant chemicals. Liquid crystal display (LCD) and plasma screens contain lead, cadmium, chromium, antimony, beryllium, and brominated flame retardants. Disposal of these and other electronic devices also wastes resources, as many contain valuable materials, like copper, gold, and aluminum that could be reused.

Maryland has had an electronics recycling program since 2005, but the funding for the program as originally designed – based entirely on registration fees paid by manufacturers – has not been sufficient to reimburse local governments for the cost of collection and recycling. Adverse market conditions in recent years led many local governments to stop accepting TVs and computer monitors in their electronics recycling programs because they are among the most expensive to recycle. Between 2013 and 2021, residential electronics recycling in Maryland fell by more than half, from 19.2 million pounds to 7.8 million pounds.

We urge you to support House Bill 931 and give it a favorable report.

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