



February 20, 2026

To: Maryland Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Re: SB0655 Electronic Device Producer Responsibility Program

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) appreciates the opportunity to support SB0655. SWANA is a member-based association of nearly 10,000 professionals from across the waste and resource management industry. Committed to advancing from waste management to resource management, we are empowering our members to deliver essential services to communities today and anticipate their needs for tomorrow.

SWANA members include the professionals collecting and transferring materials, running recycling facilities, managing landfills, providing residential recycling services and outreach, and overseeing solid waste departments, among many other job functions throughout the industry.

Electronic waste is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the world and is costly to properly manage. Electronic waste presents unique challenges, as it requires separate and specialized collection, storage, and end of life management. These items cannot be mixed with household trash and recycling due to safety and environmental protections.

SB0655, if adopted, would result in many benefits, including improving safety for professionals in waste and resource management. Lithium-ion batteries embedded in consumer electronic products are posing significant fire hazards at collection sites, within collections vehicles, at transfer stations, and at recycling and metal processing facilities. Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries have been increasingly common as consumers mistakenly discard a variety of electronics in household trash or recycling.

SWANA's first strategic goal is to make the industry safer, and our strategic plan specifically includes the need to address lithium-ion batteries, as they are a growing safety risk for workers in the industry. This legislation will help mitigate this risk by allowing consumers to have options for proper recycling.

In addition, the public sector currently collects electronic waste from residents which has a heavy financial burden. Many of SWANA's public sector members often speak of the challenges of the increasing cost obligations to manage their waste and recycling



operations. A county or city may not be able to provide convenient and accessible electronic waste recycling options to residents within their limited budgets. This legislation would shift financing of electronics collection off taxpayers and local government and allow for more robust collection services for residents.

Recycling of electronic waste has great potential if performed properly. Electronics contain critical minerals which are “essential to the economic or national security of the U.S. and whose supply chain is vulnerable to disruption” (<https://www.commerce.gov/tags/critical-minerals>). These materials are not easily substituted and have a supply risk, making it critical to recover these materials through recycling so that they can continue to be reused. The list of critical materials includes cobalt, lithium, graphite, and several other minerals that are common in batteries, electronics, and LCD screens.

Many electronics contain mercury, lead, and flame-retardant chemicals which have the potential to negatively affect human health and the environment if not properly managed. If these materials end up in a landfill or incinerator, those facilities will have the additional cost burden of treating their leachate and emissions to appropriately manage these materials. These facilities are heavily regulated by the US EPA and the State of Maryland, and they work hard to abide by the regulations and permit requirements. Diverting electronic waste from these facilities will be beneficial for all stakeholders. The proposed legislation would create additional funding for electronics collections along with annual reporting requirements, enabling greater accountability and transparency into the end of life of these materials.

SWANA commends the Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment for considering SB0655, and supports passage of this bill. If you have any questions about these comments, or about SWANA, please contact Kristyn Oldendorf, SWANA Senior Director of Public Policy and Communications, at [koldendorf@swana.org](mailto:koldendorf@swana.org) or 240-494-2237. Thank you for the opportunity to support this bill and for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kristyn Oldendorf  
Senior Director of Public Policy and Communications  
Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)

