



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 655

DATE: February 24, 2026

SPONSOR: Senator Augustine

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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POSITION: Support (Department of Environmental Protection)

Electronic Device Producer Responsibility Program - Established

This bill would create a producer responsibility program for electronic devices sold in Maryland. The program would require producers to develop, fund, and implement a plan to provide collection, transportation, and recycling of covered electronic devices at no cost to individuals and small businesses.

Electronic devices are important to manage responsibly and separately from trash and regular curbside recycling. Many of these devices contain materials that are harmful if released to the environment. Electronic devices containing batteries significantly increase the risks of fire when improperly included in trash or recycling containers.

In contrast, the separate collection of electronics for proper reuse and recycling has significant environmental benefits. Electronics contain scarce natural resources, such as gold, silver, copper, cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements. Reuse and recycling minimize the environmental impacts of mining for these metals, reducing associated energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Electronics recycling also creates a secure, domestic source of critical materials, some of which are themselves important to producing clean energy infrastructure, supporting broader climate goals.

Montgomery County collects a broad suite of electronics for recycling at its transfer station and has recently expanded curbside recycling to include on-call collection of electronics and household batteries. The County will begin repair clinics this spring to support electronics repair and reduce waste. Approximately 1.3% of municipal solid waste disposed in Montgomery County is composed of electronics. Electronic waste is projected to grow in the future as the rapid development of artificial intelligence prompts faster turnover of technology.

Montgomery County is fortunate to currently have a no-cost contract for electronics recycling, but spent approximately \$4 million on electronics recycling between 2014 and 2023. It is not guaranteed that the County could obtain a no-cost contract during the next

procurement, scheduled for FY2029. The bill would make producers responsible for the proper management of the products they put on the market, as well as for funding public education and ensuring a minimum level of recycling opportunities are available statewide. Importantly, the bill directs producers to enter into agreements with all willing public sector agencies to cover their costs of electronic recycling.

We respectfully request that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 655.