

February 25, 2026

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Bill: HB0796-Recycling-Prohibition on the Chemical Conversion of Plastic

Position: Favorable

Dear Committee Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Guyton, and Committee Members:

I enthusiastically support HB0796.

It is well known that plastic recycling as it is practiced today is an oxymoron. The pilot plastic recycling project proposed by WR Grace on its campus in Columbia, Maryland will not produce new plastic at all. Rather, the end product will be one-third toxic waste, and the bulk as two low-grade, very toxic fuel oils.

This concerns me because I live in a 24-unit 55+ plus community less than three miles from Grace, and downwind. Most of us are over 65, which is a risk factor in and of itself. And many of us have heart or lung conditions that volatile organic compounds emitted in the waste by Grace will aggravate. There are eight senior citizen facilities within a 3-mile radius of Grace, one of which has 178 units. Two others are of a similar size. Twenty Schools are also within the 3-mile radius of Grace. Residential houses are located immediately adjacent to the fence at Grace, and Grace sits in residential neighborhood.

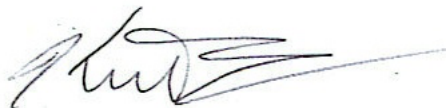
If this project is approved, other chemical companies are interested in opening similar facilities in Maryland.

This presents a threat to us and expanded such facilities in Maryland would threaten all of us.

I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0796.

Sincerely,

Kurt R. Schwarz

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt R. Schwarz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Columbia, Maryland