

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Senate Bill 99 – Yard Waste and Food Residuals Diversion and Infrastructure Study

Position: Support with amendments

January 24, 2017

Testimony by Greenbelters for Zero Waste

Greenbelters for Zero Waste is a group of Greenbelt citizens committed to reducing the city's landfill waste. We work with festivals and other public events in Greenbelt to provide collection of recyclable and compostable materials, while educating the public about the need for diverting these materials from the solid waste stream. It is educational efforts such as this that can help the state achieve the ambitious and worthwhile 90% food recovery target established for 2040. However, one of our biggest challenges is finding facilities where compostable materials can be taken. The lack of facilities and infrastructure for composting has been acknowledged in MDE's Zero Waste Plan; this plan also identified organic material recycling as one of eight core priorities. Senate Bill 99 would direct the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to study the diversion of yard waste and food residuals from refuse disposal facilities in Maryland with the goal of achieving food recovery goals and addressing the need for more composting facilities. This study by MDE, in consultation with a diverse group of stakeholders, is to result in recommendations by July 2019 for best practices and policies for Maryland. A companion House bill is being finalized that includes several clarifying amendments; we urge that these amendments also be made to SB99.

We urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 99 with amendments. Thank you.

Greenbelters for Zero Waste:

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