



January 24, 2017

The Honorable Senator Joan Carter Conway
Senate Committee on Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
Maryland State Office Building, Annapolis MD

Re: SB99 Yard Waste and Food Residuals Diversion and Infrastructure- Study

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to register my support for SB99, sponsored by Senator Thomas M. Middleton.

My name is Keith Losoya and I am a Principal Partner of Waste Neutral Group LLC. Founded in 2008 we have grown to be the largest hauler of organic (food scrap) waste in the Baltimore metro area. We service most all of the large Education and Health Care Institutions in Baltimore such as Johns Hopkins, Towson, UMBC, Loyola and Goucher Universities; and Johns Hopkins, Lifebridge and MedStar Hospital Systems. Additionally we also service large commercial clients such as Under Armour, T. Rowe Price, and Legg Mason, just to name a few.

There is an old adage that goes "pioneers take the arrows before settlers settle the land". I always think of this when it comes to the issue of food residuals diversion and infrastructure because as pioneers who began our service during the neophyte stages of this niche recycling sector, we have and continue to take arrows, especially in the area of infrastructure.

Since our inception we have experienced the closing of three facilities that accepted food waste materials for composting; Chesterfield Farms in Crofton, Recycled Green in Carrol County and Peninsula Compost in Delaware. Each time this happened whatever demand momentum that was building was put on hold and we had to inform our customers of the circumstances which made many discontinue their food waste recycling programs.

We don't argue that there were legitimate reasons for state agencies to shut these facilities down, the main issue has been the lack of alternatives when this does happen and the years it has taken to draft regulations. Understand that the slow process in developing the current guidelines essentially put a freeze on private sector investing because no one would risk an investment not knowing what the regulations would bare. Today we only have one facility in Maryland that can process our higher volumes of compostable materials and that is the MES Western Branch facility on Prince Georges County; but even they have limited us to 11 tons per week, which is approximately ¼ of our weekly volume.

Every day I am thankful for the patience and understanding of our customers who have made the firm commitment to divert as much of their waste as possible from landfills and incineration to be recycled. But even the most environmentally committed institutions are questioning their infrastructure, cost and process engineering investments in this area or recycling.

We support this bill because it is the best step we can take forward at this time. But as we do so, we encourage you to look for every opportunity in the future to make sure the next steps Maryland takes are more aggressive. It is in Maryland's best interests to encourage recycling of organic materials and the development of the infrastructure to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Losoya".

Keith Losoya, Principal Partner