



7338 Baltimore Ave
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College Park, MD 20740

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Testimony on: HB 807 – “Task Force on Recycling Policy and Recycling and Waste Systems in Maryland”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 31, 2021

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB 807. This bill would create a Task Force of multiple stakeholders to review the Maryland Recycling Act (MRA), study the recycling and waste systems in Maryland, and make recommendations on how to update the MRA and the feasibility of regional recycling and waste disposal facilities. The Task Force must report its findings and recommendations by June 30, 2022 to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

This bill is well-timed. The Maryland Recycling Act is in need of updates. The Task Force will be able to build on the findings of the summer 2020 Environment and Transportation Committee Work Group on Waste Reduction and Recycling. It will take place concurrently with discussions within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on changes in the methodology for calculating the recycling rate, including the definition of recyclable materials and the different waste streams to be included.

We appreciate that the original bill has been amended to include greater representation by counties; participation of environmental groups; review of recycling and waste systems in Maryland; incorporation of the principles of zero waste as one of the criteria in assessing the feasibility of regional recycling and waste disposal facilities; and a more realistic one-year timeline for the Task Force to deliver its findings and recommendations.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report on HB 807.

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Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has approximately 800,000 members.