



House Bill 36

Environment – Packaging, Containers, and Paper Products – Producer Responsibility

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation
and Economic Matters Committees

Date: February 9, 2021

From: Alex Butler

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 36. The bill would reasonably require packaging producers to take more responsibility for the role they play in adding to the waste stream by providing new resources to struggling recycling networks.

Currently, all costs associated with recycling and waste management are left to local governments, and in effect, taxpayers. Due largely to declining markets for recycled commodities, county recycling networks have experienced significant hardships and have been forced to draw taxpayer subsidies to continue their operations.

HB 36 outlines a framework for an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model that would place responsibility on packaging producers for end-of-life management. Industry members would form one or more stewardship organizations that would collect payments from producers covered under the bill. Local governments would be eligible to apply for and receive reimbursements for the work they are already doing, including collecting, transporting, and processing covered materials. Counties would then be able to invest any new funds back into their networks to help ease the burden on taxpayers. HB 36 would also encourage producers to make packaging that is more easily recyclable and more environmentally friendly.

HB 36 would provide needed financial support to struggling local government recycling networks by holding producers responsible for their products. Accordingly, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 36.