



House Bill 589

Solid Waste Management - Organics Recycling and Waste Diversion - Food Residuals

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 19, 2020

From: Alex Butler

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 589 as it would require facilities that generate specified amounts of food residuals to use certain composting facilities. While MACo generally supports increasing food residual composting, mandating the use of certain facilities before the necessary infrastructure is available would place many challenging and burdensome requirements on local government facilities.

HB 589 requires facilities that generate food residuals in certain volumes starting with two tons per week in 2021 separate residuals from other solid waste and divert them to an organic composting facility within 30 miles. Currently, Maryland has a limited number of organic composting facilities, and a requirement that residuals be diverted to these facilities could lead to a significant rise in costs for local government facilities.

Mandating the use of these composting facilities could lead to price gouging as food residual generators do not have another cost-effective option for disposal. Since generators are required to send their residuals to these facilities, there is a strong probability that facilities will increase prices when the artificial demand for their services rises as an effect of this mandate.

MACo recognizes the intent of HB 589 but believes it has significant cost and implementation challenges. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to provide an **UNFAVORABLE** report for HB 589.