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The Baltimore City Council

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

February 10, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 209/SB 313 Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act

I write today on behalf of the constituents of Baltimore City's 9th District in support of the Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act, introduced by Delegate Brooke Lierman and Senator Malcolm Augustine. This bill would ban plastic bags from distribution by stores at the point of sale and require stores to charge at least 10 cents for each paper bag or reusable carryout bag for sale.

There are many reasons that this legislation has my full support. One of the most important reasons is the fact that it will help to keep communities and neighborhoods clean. The impact of this bill would even extend beyond neighborhoods and communities and help keep our waterways—like the Baltimore Harbor or the Chesapeake Bay—clean, and reduce the harmful effects that plastics can have on such environments. Another reason for supporting this legislation is that it will help change consumer behavior. Specifically, this bill will help encourage more consumers to adopt the use of reusable bags in their shopping so as to avoid unnecessarily being charged for a paper bag or a new reusable bag. It is also worth mentioning that this legislation does little to burden retailers so that they are able to continue operating and focus on expanding food access to our neighborhoods—especially disadvantaged, under-resourced neighborhoods. Lastly, the Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act, as time passes, will help save residents, local governments, and businesses money spent on clean up and trash disposal of plastics.

For all of the reasons stated above, I am proud to offer my support for the Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act. Thank you for considering this legislation. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Bullock".

Councilman John Bullock, PhD
Baltimore City Council – District 9