



RE: HB0209 - Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act
Environment and Transportation
Position: Favorable

February, 11th 2020

Greetings Delegate Lierman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,.

On behalf of MOM's Organic Market, I would like to express our **support of the Plastic and Packaging Reduction Act** sponsored by Brooke Leirman. My name is Alexandra DySard, and I am the Environmental Manager for MOM's and I'm also a Trash Free Maryland Board Member.

It is estimated that around one trillion plastic bags are consumed throughout the world every year - that's roughly one million plastic bags used each minute. As a grocery store we know there are many alternatives to plastic bags, MOM's banned plastic bags in 2005, when we were very small with just two stores. We moved to providing only paper and compostable PLA bags, and offering customers a \$.10 incentive for those who brought in their own bags. Company wide our customers now bring in over 7,500 reusable bags from home each day, showing us that incentivizing good, habitual behavior works. This year we will open our 21st store, so making this switch to a positive environmental practice in no way impeded our growth.

On land plastic bags can last up to 500 years for just a few minutes of use. The average amount of time most plastic bags are used is less than 12 minutes. They are just a carrying agent to transport something from one place to another. There is no reason to provide a customer something they will use for a few minutes that will still be here 15 generations from now!

Plastic Bag bans and charging for single use alternatives is a proven mechanism to change behavior and encourage other, more sustainable options. And we know they work...

- DC saw a 72% reduction in plastic bag litter after instituting a 5 cent bag fee.
- The City of San Jose saw an 89% reduction in plastic bags in their storm drain system
- A 60 percent reduction of plastic bag litter in their waterways
- And a 59 percent reduction in plastic bag litter in neighborhoods after instituting its plastic bag ban.

Now you may be thinking, but I thought plastic bags were recyclable. Less than 8% of all plastic in the US is recycled. As a business who used to collect residents' plastic bags I can honestly tell you there is not a market. There are also no Public Works Departments, Maryland municipalities or curbside recycling programs that allow plastic bags for recycling. If they don't biodegrade and they can't be recycled, then they need to be banned.

Thank you for your time and attention on this matter. You have the opportunity to be leaders on this issue and I urge you to vote favorably on HB0209.

Thank you,

Alexandra DySard
MOM's Organic Market