

**STATEMENT OF
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PAST CHAIR, TIRE AND RUBBER DIVISION
INSTITUTE OF SCRAP RECYCLING INDUSTRIES
ON H.B. 1032**

**BEFORE THE
MARYLAND HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 26, 2020
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND**

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I respectfully submit this statement on behalf of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI) Tire and Rubber Division and its member companies. ISRI is the trade association that represents approximately 1,300 companies that process, broker, and industrially consume recyclable commodities including metals, paper, plastics, glass, textiles, rubber, and electronics. My company, Emanuel Tire, LLC, is an ISRI member company based in Baltimore, MD, and employs over 200 individuals. In the state of Maryland, the recycling industry directly supports over 2,000 jobs, generates \$1.13 billion of total economic impact and garners over \$140 million of tax revenue.

Statement Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for House Bill 1032, an act concerning the use of scrap tires. Banning the use of recycled crumb rubber for artificial turf infill, and also banning the conversion of tires into tire derived fuel (TDF), ISRI believes that this legislation will harm Maryland's recyclers, the economy, and the environment.

- Banning a vibrant end use market for recycled crumb rubber, even though sound science supports the use of artificial turf;
- Further distorting market demand by banning the alternative use of scrap tires as TDF; and
- Placing Maryland recyclers at a distinct disadvantage against competitors in other states.

Emanuel Tires and the Tire Recycling Industry

Emanuel Tire Family of Companies, under the leadership of Norman Emanuel, has been in the scrap tire business for 60 years. We have received national recognition for our efforts to establish standards in the scrap tire industry and for deriving new uses for shredded tires. Emanuel Tire was a founding member of the National Association of Scrap Tire Processors (NASTP) – which is now the Tire & Rubber Division of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI). Emanuel Tire has been a member of the ISRI



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Board of Directors and is innately familiar with the development of state and national scrap tire recycling programs.

The Emanuel Tire Family of Companies processes over 17 million tires per year, typically received from one of three sources: tires delivered to our plant by individuals or companies; trailers or pick-up services at locations where customers have large volume of tires; and the clean-up of private or government owned stockpiles.

To be perfectly clear, Emanuel Tire does not landfill any of our shredded products. All of the tires we process are shredded and used in one of a number of existing and promising markets, including:

- Tire Chips shredded to customer specification and used in civil engineering projects;
- Safe-T-Play and Safe-T-Footing 100% wire free playground and horse arena material;
- Recycled Reclaim Industry Material (RRIM), used by industry processors who fine grind our material then mold them for cattle mats, athletic surfacing and flooring tiles;
- Tire Derived Fuel (TDF) a fuel source in many kilns and energy plants;
- Septic System Material (SSM) used in commercial and residential drainage fields;
- Sound Wall Material rubber chips used to make highway noise reduction walls; and
- Forever Mulch, a colorized chip used in landscaping and architectural enhancement.

Emanuel Tire is committed to the environmentally safe use of our tire products. We are licensed and recognized by the Maryland Department of the Environment, Pennsylvania Department of Environment and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality as a Scrap Tire Hauler, Scrap Tire Collection Facility and a Scrap Tire Recycler. Additionally, Emanuel Tire employs an OSHA approved Environmental, Health and Safety program at all of our facilities.

Environmentally Responsible Solutions

Each year, approximately 110 million tires are processed in the United States by the scrap recycling industry – or one tire for every three people in the U.S. In the past, scrap tires — generated when an old, worn tire is replaced with a new tire — were often dumped illegally in lakes, abandoned lots, along the side of the road and in sensitive habitats. Today, scrap tires are playing a much different role as an important part of the manufacturing process in a variety of products as well as providing environmentally responsible solutions to age-old problems.

Over the past few decades, tire recyclers have invested millions of dollars in technologies and equipment to recycle tires, allowing scrap tires to play an important role in strengthening our economy and protecting our environment. Thanks to these innovations in manufacturing, recycled rubber is now a common alternative used, for example, to facilitate softer playground surfaces, reduce the chance of injuries for athletes, and provide softer, lower-impact surfaces for those on their feet hard at work and play.



Recycled rubber is a highly sought material in the manufacturing industry. In the U.S. alone, scrap processors produce more than 1 billion pounds of crumb rubber annually that is used in the creation of new products ranging from landscaping materials, playground coverings, and infill for athletic playing surfaces used by pro-athletes, colleges/universities, high schools, and communities, as well as long-term, high-traffic items such as roadways, sidewalks and horse tracks. Applications for recycled rubber — such as rubberized asphalt and crumb rubber — have become recognized for their preferable properties and are gaining in prominence and widespread use.

Sound Science Supports Artificial Turf

ISRI can only surmise that the underlying rationale for the proposed ban on returning scrap tires to the marketplace for use as artificial turf is based on unsubstantiated assertions circulated that playing on artificial turf fields with recycled rubber infill is connected to long-term health risks. If that is the case, however, then the proper course of action is to examine the peer-reviewed scientific data from university, federal and international studies that overwhelmingly contradict these false and misleading statements.

As for the underlying concerns that may be the basis for this proposed ban, ISRI joins with the overwhelming number of scientific experts, communities, athletic clubs and others who are avid supporters of artificial turf playing fields. There are more than 12,000 artificial turf playing fields that are made from crumb rubber infill generated by recycled tires in the United States. Athletics programs are increasingly improving with athlete safety in mind, and as such it is more and more common for owners of playing fields to consider the benefits of artificial turf surfaces. In fact, when considering replacing an old field with a new one, or embarking on a brand new project, to ask the question of whether to use artificial turf or natural turf comes up early and often. The benefits of artificial turf are enormous as evidenced by its growing popularity.

Decisions on whether to install artificial turf fields are based on numerous factors, not the least of which is safety. State and local governments around the nation that are responsible for installation and maintenance of athletic fields have chosen artificial turf based on long-established scientific data indicating it is safe. More than 110 scientific studies and reports, including peer-reviewed academic analyses and federal and state government reports, have thus far found no significant health risk associated with artificial turf.

ISRI finds little logic in HB 1032, particularly since studies as recent as this year continue to attest to the safe nature of this popular playing surface. ISRI would be happy to direct members of this committee to the numerous independent scientific studies which support this fact. These studies have examined a number of variables through exposure pathways such as inhalation, ingestion, and dermal contact. They are comprehensive studies with independent analysis.

Most recently, in July 2019, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its own long-awaited crumb rubber characterization report, which summarized results on a range of metals and organic chemicals which the EPA found in their study of tire crumb rubber, confirming what we already knew: crumb rubber is made of the same components found in everyday consumer products, and

hospital and classroom floors. In the dozens of substances tested, it found low and below-detection limits emissions consistent with previous studies. Also in July 2019, the National Toxicology Program (NTP) released four reports on potential human exposure to crumb rubber. The reports examined the chemical and physical characterization of crumb rubber and conducted in vivo and in vitro studies on various routes of exposure from crumb rubber, observing no evidence of health problems in the studies. (https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.syntheticurfCouncil.org/resource/resmgr/research/research_summary_of_recycled.pdf)

Additionally, the Washington State Department of Health completed an investigation of reported cancer among soccer players in the state, stating that "our investigation did not show increased rates of cancer among reported soccer players, and the available research does not suggest that playing soccer on artificial turf causes cancer" and recommending "that people who enjoy soccer continue to play regardless of the type of field surface." (www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/SyntheticTurf)

While some news reports have focused on the fact that chemicals are found in recycled rubber, the mere presence of a chemical does not mean it poses potential health risks. The most common four chemicals found in recycled rubber that have been brought up as points of concern are arsenic, benzene, cadmium, and nickel. By themselves this may sound an alarm, but it is important to take this in context and in relation to how often we come into contact with each as part of everyday life. For instance:

- Rubber in turf has less arsenic than rice; less cadmium than in lobster; less nickel than in chocolate; and less benzene than in a can of soda.
- The International Agency of Cancer Research has stated these chemicals are all safe in low amounts and are simply part of the world we live in and the food we don't think twice about.

Given this, regulatory reports have found that chemical exposures from artificial turf present a very low risk.

Bans disrupt markets and harm Maryland recyclers

In addition to the ban on the use of recycled crumb rubber as part of an artificial turf field, HB 1032 would further distort markets by banning the use of scrap tires as TDF or as a fuel substitute at an approved resource recovery facility. While this may seem like an odd problem for the tire recycling industry to point out, it is not. Because tire recycling is a classic example of supply and demand economics, any artificially generated volume without similar demand for such volume can distort value for such material.

Make no mistake, ISRI does not consider incineration or energy recovery to be recycling, however, under certain market conditions, these non-recycling choices are necessary if not vital to the overall health of the marketplace. Under today's market conditions, there is simply not enough market demand to support the volumes of tires being recycled in the United States. While TDF is not a preferred use for tires, it has historically been a vital tool in eliminating legacy stockpiles, and is vital to preventing landfilling, stockpiling, or market distortions.



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ISRI's tire and rubber recyclers fully support the continued growth of end use markets for used tires and the resulting commodity grades, such as crumb rubber over tire derived fuel (TDF). However, imposing artificial barriers for alternative uses such as fuel, compounded by also banning preferable recycled end use markets for crumb rubber such as artificial turf, will, under current market conditions, hurt the tire recycling industry.

Maryland scrap tire recyclers would be placed at a severe competitive disadvantage versus tire recyclers operating in other neighboring states. With two markets for end-of-life tires closed, Maryland's tire recyclers would be forced to channel their supply into other markets that do not have the demand to support them, endangering the ability of Maryland's tire recyclers to continue to operate and directly threatening the continued employment of hundreds of Maryland citizens. As a result, abandoned tires will again blight the Maryland landscape.

Conclusion

By banning existing markets for processed scrap tires, Maryland HB 1032 will dramatically limit the recyclability of scrap tires, not encourage it. ISRI's tire recyclers encourage this body to consult with experts in the recycling industry on the market dynamics for scrap tires prior to placing bans on end use markets that will harm recycling businesses operating in Maryland. Because of this, and on behalf of all tire recyclers working to improve our environment and economy by keeping valuable recyclable materials out of landfills or being illegally discarded in our lakes, parks and our Chesapeake Bay, I urge this distinguished committee to oppose this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration,

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