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Comments before House Environment
& Transportation Committee

FAVORABLE

**HB 1538: Environment - Waste
Haulers - Reporting Requirement**

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Good afternoon. My name is Mike Ewall, and I'm the founder and director of a national organization, Energy Justice Network. Energy Justice works at the local level with grassroots community groups in Maryland and the rest of the country to support efforts to promote Zero Waste, and to protect communities from unnecessary dirty energy and waste industry facilities.

This is an important bill to bring Maryland up to speed with other jurisdictions, like DC, where they passed a law in 2014 requiring private haulers to report where waste and recycling goes.

We support this bill with the sponsor's amendments that would extend the reporting to recycling facilities in the state as well.

Currently, a lot of material that is source separated and collected for recycling ends up in landfills and incinerators. However, it's still counted as if it were recycled. This includes a large portion of glass that is dumped on top of landfills as daily landfill cover. It includes unrecyclable materials thrown in recycling bins. It includes materials too small to be properly sorted in recycling plants. (Generally, anything less than two inches by two inches won't make it through a recycling plant.) It can even include perfectly good recyclable material that is discarded for lack of a viable market.

These should not count toward county recycling rates.

The amendments provide for reporting from recycling facilities on how much material actually ends up being recycled so that counties can report more honest figures.

They also ensure that reported data is available to the public just as similar data is already public information, showing how many tons of various waste types flow from each county to each waste facility.

Finally, the amendments would ensure that penalties are significant enough to ensure compliance with reporting requirements, and that the savings clause from Delegate Smith's parallel bill, HB 987 on hotel recycling, is echoed in this one.

We encourage a favorable report, with the sponsor's amendments.