



Baltimore Beyond Plastic

***11 E. Mount Royal Avenue,
2nd floor, Baltimore, 21202
bmorebeyondplastic.org***

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 313 Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act Finance Committee February 20, 2020

Chairwoman Kelley, Co-chair Feldman & Members of the Committee:

Baltimore Beyond Plastic strongly supports SB313 as a necessary step in addressing our changing climate and the need for a broad systemic shift to address the destruction of our single use culture.

#1- A ban on plastic bags when paired with an imposed minimum price on reusable bags has been proven effective in changing the behavior of consumers. California, being the first state to ban plastic bags in 2016, has been wildly successful with their waste reduction. CalRecycle, the agency tasked with managing and enforcing California's laws related to waste management recently released a report showing the results of a survey among thousands of stores and grocers. The study found that in the six months after the bag ban went into effect, in 86% of transactions, customers brought their own bag and didn't purchase a paper or reusable bag. This study thoroughly proves that putting a ban on plastic bags, and a price on paper bags, is a highly effective solution to solve a portion of our states detrimental plastic usage.

#2- Plastics use and production fuels climate change, negatively impacts our health, and harms our environment. Fossil fuels are the basis of plastic production. Between production and disposal of plastics, archaic harmful industries are supported. These industries prioritize wealth over health. Climate change is terrifying, especially to our generation and it impacts our most vulnerable populations the hardest. As a coastal state with areas of concentrated poverty, Maryland is at high risk for the fury that is our changing climate. If we want to really work towards slowing down climate change, it is your responsibility to take these critical steps towards disbanding our single use culture.

#3- We as youth have spoken. We are not disposable. Our generation is standing up across the planet to make our voice heard in the issue we face with the destruction caused by our wasteful single-use culture. The threat of inaction against climate change is real and our generation is uncertain that our future is promised. Millions of youth across the globe are calling on our elected leaders to act on the facts and work across party lines to work toward our secure future. We accept the challenge of rethinking our convenience culture that we were born into, realizing this legislation will have the longest impact on us. Some of us have been taught in our school groups to "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Refuse". It is time to refuse the bag, reduce our impact, and to repair our planet.



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For these important reasons and many more that will be highlighted in your other supportive testimony, we strongly urge the Committee to vote in favor of SB313.

Thank you for your time, your service and your consideration,

Baltimore Beyond Plastic

Maya Wiekert, Sophomore at The Baltimore City College
Nicholas Kophengnavong, Senior at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute
Katelynn Johnson, Senior at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute
Juno Adekunle-Owens, Junior at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute
Rachel Fink, Senior at The Baltimore City College
Elizabeth Sacktor, Senior at Baltimore School for the Arts
Dija Thompson, Sophomore at The Baltimore City College
Jackie Nuatez, The Last Plastic Straw
Patricia Mott, Resident
Cheryl Bryant, Patterson Park Neighborhood Association
Claire Lyons, Trash Free Maryland
Caroline Mayner, Wyndhurst Improvement Association
Tina Lazar, Woodhome ELE
Marian Denning, Teacher at Harlem Park Elementary School
Cynthia Kicklighter, Resident
Chad Pfrommer, Resident
Ryan Ariosa, Teacher at Commodore John Rodgers

Youth Environmental Network, Baltimore City

Students of Harlem Park Elementary/Middle School Green Team
Students of Furley Elementary School Green Team
Students of Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle School Green Team
Students of Augusta Fells Savage Institute for Visual Arts High School Green Team
Students of Reginald F. Lewis High School Green Team