

701 W. 37th Street,  
Baltimore, MD 21211

**Testimony on SB 313**  
**Position: FAVORABLE**  
**February 15, 2020**

Dear Chairwoman Delores Kelly and Members of the Committee,

As you are aware, we are in a plastic pollution crisis. Every minute of every day a garbage truck worth plastic enters our waterways. It is time to address this issue by supporting bill SB313 Plastic and Packaging Reduction Act (PPRA).

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0209?ys=2020RS>

If we carry on as usual, this is expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 and four per minute by 2050. By 2050, this could mean there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans. The system needs to change.

2 million single-use plastic bags are consumed every minute. These bags often wind up in waterways and our landscape, degrading water and soil as they break down into tiny toxic bits. These bags have a massive carbon footprint.

Beginning on New Year's Day, Mom's Organic Market, with ten Maryland locations, stopped accepting plastic bags for recycling. Mom's reluctantly told its customers that the material was being incinerated as waste to energy, and was therefore misleading to customers to offer plastic bag recycling.

Switching to paper is not the answer. The carbon footprint of paper bags is even bigger. Paper production uses trees that could instead be absorbing carbon dioxide, releases more greenhouse gases, takes 3 times the amount of water, and results in 50 times more water pollutants. We can bring our own bags.

But there are people who need more than intrinsic environmental values to remember their bags. They need a nudge. This bill is that nudge.

This type of legislation has proven successful around the world, but we do not need to look further than our own backyard to prove the point.

Montgomery County, MD: A 5 cent fee on paper and single-use plastic bags reduced single-use bag use by 42 percentage points (from 82% to 40%). Washington, DC: City officials say plastic bag usage has plummeted 50 to 70 percent since the fee took effect

in 2009 and in 2017, more than three-quarters of city businesses complied with the law – the largest proportion so far.

I am asking for a favorable report on SB313 The Plastic and Packaging Reduction Act.

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Resources:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/10/every-minute-one-garbage-truck-of-plastic-is-dumped-into-our-oceans/>

[https://scaan.net/docs/ScAAN\\_Bags\\_report.pdf](https://scaan.net/docs/ScAAN_Bags_report.pdf)