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MAYOR

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SB 313

February 20, 2020

TO: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 313 – Plastics & Packaging Reduction Act
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

Chair Kelley, Vice-Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 313.

Senate Bill 313 would prohibit a store from distributing plastic single-use carry out bags to a customer at the point of sale. The bill would require a store to charge and collect at least 10 cents for each durable carryout bag the store provides to a customer. The legislation also authorizes a store to retain all money collected under certain circumstances and provides certain penalties for violations under this Act. The bill also establishes the Single-Use Workgroup to study and make recommendations regarding single use products.

Baltimore City, like many other Maryland jurisdictions, struggles with the problem of litter in its streets and waterways. The increase of plastic debris in the world's oceans is a growing crisis. Requiring individuals to use and pay for durable carryout bags gives them the opportunity to think about their use of plastic materials that have the potential to harm the environment. By reducing the use of plastic bags and packaging at the source, this legislation would benefit the goal of waste reduction.

If Maryland adopts this legislation, it would join many jurisdictions throughout the United States and internationally that have adopted or proposed bans and restrictions on plastic bags. The Baltimore City Council recently adopted a ban on plastic bags and a State-wide ban would strengthen our goal of less litter in our neighborhoods, waterways, and along our roadways.

Eliminating the use of plastic bags is a major step in resolving the challenges of litter and unnecessary waste while pursuing the goal of zero waste.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 313.

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