

I am in support of HB0069.

As a member of Less Plastics in Howard County, which conducted a survey of restaurants in our area, we found support for this bill.

From the business perspective this law will result in cost savings thus being a plus for them. Consumers are beginning to take an active interest in reducing their plastic waste and look toward companies to take an active role.

It's been reported from the Product Stewardship Institute restaurants save money and lessen landfill use. In a pilot program in Greenport, NY, the first thing the restaurants did was calculate their carbon footprint. Then they implemented several strategies to lower their plastic use: switched to compostable take-out containers; switched to paper carryout bags and unwrapped BPI-certified compostable carry-out cutlery; phased in paper straws; they asked if customers wanted to-go foodware containers; and they discontinued the sale of plastic bottles. The result was an annual cost savings of approximately \$3300 which included a waste fee. It should be noted, this saved 632,080 pounds of plastic waste. Also, operational efficiency was boosted and saved staff time as well (for example, there were fewer clogged drains due to plastic straws).

Closer to home Mother's Cantina, a restaurant in Ocean City, found it cost 2 cents more to use paper instead of plastic bags. They passed this along to their customers. Noone complained. During the study period, the number of instances of the bag fee used (the amount of times the to go button was hit on point of sale) was 9,790. Also, the revenue generated by the bag charge was \$195.80. There were zero complaints in reference to the bag charge. The transaction fee was not recognized nor important to the customer. 100% of customer comments resulting from the surcharge were positive and led to conversations about environmental consciousness. "Many of the conversations surrounding our environmental efforts resulted in repeat business, a larger spend while in the business, and some cross promotion with other small business owners."

All in all the passing of this bill will have a positive impact on both businesses and our state's environment. Please support HB0069.

Thank you.

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