



Post Office Box 1123
Bethesda, MD 20827-1123

February 24, 2021

For the record, I'm Peggy Dennis from Potomac, testifying in **support of HB857** on behalf of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.. Since its founding in 1925, the volunteers of the MCCF have committed themselves to providing an effective citizen voice to government policy makers, both elected and appointed.

The Civic Federation strongly supports HB85. This bill will require a producer of synthetic turf and turf infill to establish a system to track the chain of custody of the synthetic turf and turf infill from their manufacture to their reuse, recycling, and final disposal. This is crucial for environmental, climate change, public health and fiscal reasons

When we buy new tires, we pay a fee for the disposal of the old tires as hazardous waste. The tires are ground up into "tire crumb" and spread between the plastic blades of the plastic carpeting known as Artificial Turf. But Artificial Turf (AT) is a completely unregulated product. Both the plastic blades and the crumb rubber infill contain numerous toxic substances which are harmful to the environment, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the watersheds which carry away tons of tiny particles into the Potomac and the Chesapeake. Children and adults who play on AT fields get heat burns and more severe sports injuries than they get on natural fields. The AT fields are heat sinks which absorb so much heat that they cannot be played on during the summer. Thus, they also contribute to climate change

Artificial Turf fields must be replaced every 8-10 years. Each field represents many tons of toxic waste and there is, at present, no way to safely "recycle" the degraded product. Like nuclear waste, there is **no good solution**. Disposal costs per field are estimated to be \$130,000 plus transportation and land fill charges. Should taxpayers be on the hook for this kind of bill for every school and recreation department playing field and play ground that has to be removed? That's a mighty steep charge mostly falling on the taxpayers.

By requiring the producers of AT fields to provide a "chain of custody" record covering the disposal of this toxic product, we take a small first step at regulating a product which creates local environmental and public health challenges and global climate change. It should have been done at least 10 years ago. But better late than never. That's why the Montgomery County Civic Federation urges you to send HB857 on with a **Favorable** report.