

An Affiliate of
the Maryland Association
of Counties, Inc.



Reply to:

DATE: February 2, 2022
TO: Members, Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors
RE: HB 135 Environment-Single Use Plastics-Restrictions

The Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors (the Conference) **Supports with Amendments HB 135.**

The Conference agrees that eliminating plastics is good for the environment and supports the intent of the bill. However, the bill indicates that enforcement may be by a unit of government that has the authority to inspect food service businesses. Continuous requirements being imposed on local health department food programs creates a negative impact on food safety inspections. Investigations for plastic ware, polystyrene, and plastic bags have nothing to do with food safety and does take time away from those mandated inspections. Additionally, local health departments are severely understaffed due to issues regarding recruitment and retention. Enforcement of this bill will further impede with local health departments ability to meet their food safety inspection mandates.

While we agree it does makes sense for the local government which has the authority to inspect food service facilities also have the enforcement power, the enforcement agency of this bill should be left up to the local governments and therefore under section 9-2110 (A) (2), A UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT THAT HAS THE AUTHORITY TO INSPECT FOOD SERVICE BUSINESSES be substituted with "A UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR MUNICIPALITY".

Accordingly, we request the Committee **SUPPORT HB 135 WITH AMENDMENTS.**

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter. If you have further questions concerning this written testimony, please contact:

Kenneth Welch, President
Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors
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