

HB 131 - SUPPORT  
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HB 131 SUPPORT - Environment – Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill – Chain of Custody  
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Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 131. I represent the Zero Waste Montgomery Coalition, a citizens' group of Montgomery County dedicated to helping the County find every strategy possible to reduce our waste and find the most environmentally safe, and economically viable solutions for the disposal of whatever waste we are not able to reuse, repurpose or recycle. After an in-depth analysis of the County's existing systems and financial records we recently produced a report at the request of the County Executive that shows a viable path to dramatically reducing our waste following strict environmental and social justice criteria and within a budget well below what we are currently spending for waste disposal.

The passage of this bill is integral to what we all hold dear and are working hard to achieve for our county and the state of Maryland. We cannot eliminate overnight the production and use of materials that have proven to be problematic for our environment and our long-term health. There is a myriad of these from the plastics we use in every aspect of our life to the batteries in our equipment and even the solar panels we are eagerly installing on our rooftops in an effort to slow the effects of CO2 emissions in our environment. What we can do, however is start down the path of responsibly managing these materials that we use in our day-to-day life. Synthetic turf fields are perfect example of this. We aren't going to eliminate them anytime soon, but this bill will assure that they are managed and disposed of responsibly in the best way our current technology allows us to do. This is an eminently reasonable piece of legislation. It does not put burden on our communities or on the industry beyond what is appropriate. Given the devastating toxicity of inappropriate disposal of used synthetic turf fields, we must ensure that there is a clear and transparent chain of custody for the materials that compose these fields.

We at Zero Waste to Montgomery are realistic enough to know that we cannot actually get to zero waste overnight. We can, however, do everything in our power to minimize the harmful effects of the products we produce and use throughout their lifespan. This is what the results of our report show, and it is the basis for which Montgomery County will move forward with its solid waste management strategy. HB 131 aligns perfectly with this plan of action.

Without reservation, we wholeheartedly support a favorable report on HB131.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lauren Greenberger  
The Zero Waste Montgomery Coalition