



To: Senator Joan Carter Conway
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Date: March 18, 2013
Re: SB 1049 - Recycling - Apartment Buildings and Condominiums

The Maryland Recycling Network (MRN) represents public sector recycling program managers, private sector collectors and processors of recyclables, as well as companies that use recyclables as a raw material in making new products and other supporters of recycling in Maryland.

We are proud of the strides Maryland has taken in the last two decades in increasing its statewide recycling rate. As a result of these efforts, and the leadership shown by the Maryland legislature, we are increasing recycling, lowering Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions, reducing disposal costs and creating a healthier environment and a stronger economy.

While we generally support all initiatives to enhance recycling in Maryland, we have great reservations regarding SB 1049. SB 1049 exempts apartment and condominiums from recycling requirements if they meet two criteria. The first is if the county or municipality does not currently provide curbside recycling. The second is if the county or municipality uses a methane-to-energy or a waste-to-energy system or facility for disposal.

We believe SB 1049 represents a step backwards. The current law does not require local governments to provide the recycling service, except in very limited situations. It simply requires the owner of a multi-family housing building to provide recycling. That would include providing recycling bins for each unit and central collection bins to consolidate those recyclables for the building's recycling contractor. Additionally, not all counties can be served by sending their waste to a waste-to-energy facility or a landfill with methane recovery. This could be because of current disposal contracts, no methane recovery in landfill, distance to disposal facility or other issues.

In 2012, Maryland became the second state in the nation to require the opportunity to recycle at multi-family housing. We strongly believe Maryland should move forward in implementing the multi-family legislation passed last year rather than potentially undermining that initiative with SB 1049.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Executive Director, Peter Houstle at phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, 301-725-2508 or MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions regarding our position on this bill or other recycling issues you would like to discuss.

We look forward to working with you to continue the strides we have all made to improve our recycling in a time-effective and cost-effective manner.

Sincerely,

Tanya M. Adams, MRN President
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Maryland Recycling Network
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