

**Committee: Environment and Transportation Committee**

**Testimony on: HB1166 Howard County - Authority to Impose Fees for Use of Disposable Bags Ho. Co. 04-19**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing Date: March 12, 2019**

We are writing on behalf of the Forest Ridge 5<sup>th</sup> grade Green Team to urge you to vote in favor of HB1166, a bill that will authorize Howard County to impose a fee of up to five cents on disposable plastic bags as part of a retail sale of products.

The plastic pollution crisis is making headline news. We cannot ignore it any longer. Nearly two million single-use plastic bags are distributed worldwide every minute. If plastic production isn't curbed, plastic pollution will outweigh fish pound for pound by 2050. The average American family takes home almost 1,500 plastic shopping bags a year. According to Waste Management, only one percent of plastic bags are returned for recycling. That means that the average family only recycles 15 bags a year; the rest ends up in landfills as waste or worse as litter in the land and waterways of Maryland.

As part of the Green Team, we provided testimony at a Calvin Ball Listening session in favor of this measure, created posters to display at school, implemented Trash Free Friday, and have also started having no straw days. We have educated the school about the single-use plastics problem through posters, announcements, and videos.

We must address this issue with urgency. A fee on plastic bags is the most effective way to create behavior change and thereby address this critical issue.

We urge your support on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Grace E.  
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Katie L.  
Kim Clawson

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