

STATE OF MARYLAND

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Shari T. Wilson, Secretary**

**BILL NO: HB 595**

**COMMITTEE: Environmental Matters**

**POSITION: Support**

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**TITLE: State Government – Recycling Program –  
Aluminum, Glass, Paper, and Plastic**

**BILL ANALYSIS:** The bill requires that by July 1, 2010, the recycling plan developed by the Office of Recycling, in cooperation with the Department of General Services (DGS) and other State agencies, under §9-1706(a) of the Environment Article must include a system for recycling aluminum, glass, paper, and plastic. The system must include the placement of collection bins in State-owned or State-operated office buildings. By January 1, 2012, each State agency and unit of State government must implement its recycling plan to include these additional requirements.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE:** The Department supports House Bill 595. The Department is currently responsible for coordinating with DGS and other State agencies to develop recycling plans that reduce by recycling the amount of the solid waste stream generated for disposal by State government by at least 20 percent or to an amount that is determined practical and economically feasible but no less than 10 percent.

In calendar year 2007, the last year data is available, State agencies collectively recycled 27.7 percent of the waste collected. This is a 10.8 percent increase in the recycling rate over 2006. However, not all State agencies met the 20 percent recycling rate required by the 1988 Maryland Recycling Act. Thirteen (13) of the thirty-three (33) agencies reporting did not meet the 20 percent requirement and two (2) agencies did not provide data as required.

This legislation would require State agencies to recycle materials that are routinely collected as part of municipal recycling programs. In addition, it would require the placement of collection bins in all State-owned and State operated office buildings. These requirements would ensure that recycling is available to State employees and presumably to State agency customers, as well.

Waste diversion and recycling saves energy, reduces green house gasses and other pollutants generated in the manufacturing process and at landfills, saves natural resources, and reduces the amount of waste disposed at waste disposal facilities. Consider the following money-saving scenarios based upon 2007 State government recycling data with an average Maryland sanitary landfill tipping fee of \$52 per ton:

- Maryland State government realized \$1,317,888 of avoided disposal costs by recycling 25,344 tons of MRA material.
- If each State agency achieves a 20% recycling rate by increasing its MRA recycling tonnage, \$131,082 in additional avoided disposal costs would be realized for a potential total savings of \$1,448,970.

Even in this time of lowered market returns on recyclables, there continue to be avoided disposal costs with recycling aluminum, glass, paper, and plastic. State government should set an example by increasing its recycling of these materials.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,**  
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