



March 25, 2019

The Honorable Paul Pinsky
Chairman, Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB510 – Organic Waste – Organics Recycling – Collection and Acceptance for Final Disposal SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Pinsky,

The American Biogas Council (ABC) writes in support of House Bill 510 in efforts to increase food waste recycling in Maryland by ensuring that food waste is recycled in an organics recycling facility, such as an anaerobic digester.

The American Biogas Council is the only national trade association representing the entire biogas industry in the U.S. The ABC represents over 200 companies covering the entire biogas supply chain who are dedicated to maximizing the production and use of biogas from organic material, including many companies in Maryland and companies interested in doing business here. This creates an additional opportunity in the Chesapeake Bay when food waste and other organic material is digested.

Biogas systems take organic material, like food waste, and digest it using a natural microbial process to produce biogas and both liquid and solid digestate. Digestate can be used as a feedstock for compost or turned into compost directly. Furthermore, because of the way digestion breaks down organic material in an anaerobic digester, nutrients like phosphorus can be much more easily separated from the liquid and solid digestate than they can from undigested material. This creates an additional opportunity for nutrient management in the Chesapeake Bay when food waste is digested.

This bill has the potential to greatly support growth of the biogas industry in Maryland. Currently Maryland has 25 operational biogas systems but we see the potential for more than 38 new biogas projects to be developed. Constructing this many projects would generate about \$114 million in capital investment, and create 950 short-term construction jobs, 76 long-term jobs, and numerous industry-supporting jobs. If fully realized, these biogas systems could produce enough electricity to power 164,477 homes (1.9 billion kWh) or enough renewable natural gas to fuel 275,820 vehicles. They would also collectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 9 trillion tons of carbon dioxide, the same as growing 35 million tree seedlings for ten years or the amount 1,169,190 acres of U.S. American forest sequester each year.

We thank you for helping increase recycling infrastructure for organic material in Maryland and urge you and your committee's support of HB510.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Serfass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Patrick Serfass
Executive Director, American Biogas Council