



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Deputy Secretary

March 18, 2010

The Honorable Maggie L. McIntosh, Chairman
Environmental Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Re: House Bill 678 – Frederick County – Pay-As-You-Throw Pilot Program

Dear Chairman McIntosh:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or “the Department”) has reviewed House Bill 678, entitled *Frederick County – Pay-As-You-Throw Pilot Program*, and we would like to express our support for the overall objectives of recycling and waste reduction this bill seeks to promote.

The bill would authorize the Board of County Commissioners for Frederick County to establish a pilot program in which a solid waste hauler could charge a residential customer a fee for curbside collection based on the volume of waste collected. This type of program, known as “Pay-As-You Throw” (PAYT), typically charges residents for the collection of household waste, with the fee based on the amount of waste thrown away. This is a direct incentive for residents to reduce their waste stream and to recycle more. PAYT programs usually charge a resident a per bag or container fee or charge based on the weight of waste disposed. The less thrown away, the less a resident pays. Recycling services are free under these programs. Additional information on PAYT programs can be found on EPA’s website at <http://www.epa.gov/osw/conserves/tools/payt/index.htm>.

Although EPA’s website indicates that in 2006, there were 49 PAYT communities in Maryland, the Department cannot confirm this information. County fact sheets maintained by the Department indicate that there are only two actual PAYT programs in Maryland: Charles County’s “Tag a Bag Program” and the City of Aberdeen’s (Harford County) volume based sticker system. Although the Department recognizes that the implementation of PAYT programs may require significant upfront capital costs for containers, collection vehicles, scales, and data management systems, these programs have proven to increase recycling and reduce waste generation. Valuable information that could be shared with other jurisdictions in the State may be obtained if Frederick County were to be authorized to establish a residential PAYT pilot program.

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It is also possible that if the recycling rate in Frederick County were to increase as a result of the implementation of a PAYT program, the State, as a whole could see increased recycling and waste diversion rates. Waste diversion and recycling saves energy, reduces greenhouse gasses and other pollutants generated in the manufacturing process and at landfills, saves natural resources, and reduces the amount of waste disposed, thus decreasing costs to local governments. PAYT programs are one worthy waste management alternative that local governments should investigate.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor House Bill 678 during the Committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at lnissley@mde.state.md.us if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Horacio Tablada, Director
Land Management Administration

cc: The Honorable Paul S. Stull
Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Heather Barthel, Director of Legislation and Policy
Lisa Nissley, Legislative Liaison/Environmental Justice Coordinator