

CB 13-2021

Sayers, Margery

From: Jeffrey Dannis <jeff.dannis@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 22, 2021 10:15 AM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: CB-13-2021

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Howard County Council
Especially Councilpersons Rigby, Jones and Walsh

Re: CB-13-2021 Food Serviceware and straw legislation
Having read through this bill, I find it completely ineffective and only causes stress to restaurants or food-service establishments.

Straws

Page 2 Lines 22-25 identifies that restaurants and other establishments cannot distribute plastic straws unless they have available for distribution paper or reusable straws. This does not make them offer the alternative straws nor does this encourage or support them to minimize plastic or paper straw distribution to only those who request straws. It only makes these establishments have them in their stock. The rest of section 14.1201 is just not relevant. This piece of legislation does nothing to reduce pollution, nothing to improve customer's health, nor reduce ancillary stuff in carry out bags. **Please correspond with me to explain what this piece of legislation will actually do, re-write it or just repeal it.**

Serviceware

In Section 14.1200 definitions, plastic food ware is identified as anything that is more than 50% plastic or bioplastic. Thus, anything that is less than 50% plastic or bioplastic is not plastic food ware, but also anything that has a PE or wax coating is not considered plastic food ware (page 2 lines 12-13).

Section 14.1202 (A) bans providers from distributing plastic food ware. This bans them from distributing trays/plates bowls made from 100% plastic #5 which are acceptable in Howard County recycling. This also bans providers from distributing 100% bioplastic items which are compostable. The ban gives an exception for PE coated service ware often seen in milk jugs and waxy paper plates. Those items are not limited in any way, but are not compostable (25%+ plastic) and are only recyclable in certain markets. **This ban drives food providers to purchase and create demand for complex packaging items that are only destined for the trash can. Please correspond with me to explain how this legislation will fix a problem that exists; if you can't, re-write it or just repeal it.**

Enforcement

Section 14.1204 charges the Office of Environmental Sustainability with enforcement of this legislation. The writers of this legislation must not be aware about what OES does or how it operates. OES has no field inspectors, no method of enforcement, no plan to enforce this legislation, nor does it have any other responsibilities anything like this in its mission. **Please correspond with me to explain how the Council plans to expand OES's role and provide funding for such actions, or perhaps re-write it or just repeal the whole piece of legislation.**

Howard County generates about 200,000 tons of food scrap per year and has no plan to address this. While a small portion of it is recycled, composted or diverted, most of it is landfilled producing potent greenhouse gases. Yes we have a composting facility that will eventually take about 7,500 tons/year of post-consumer food scrap, but we need a comprehensive plan and the zoning to allow facilities to address this huge environmental problem. Yes a company is planning on building a food scrap digester in the County, but depending upon one for profit company is not the diversified approach that is needed.

Please work on legislation that will tackle real problems rather than legislation that will require restaurants to carry on their shelves a box of paper straws.

Jeffrey Dannis

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