



Council President Kate Stewart  
Councilmembers  
Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20815

February 11, 2025

**Testimony on the Resolution to approve the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan**

**2025-2034**

**Zero Waste Montgomery County**

Council President Stewart and Council Members,

I am testifying today on behalf of Zero Waste Montgomery County. Our group is a dedicated group of residents from throughout the county, who have been advocating for Zero Waste programs and closing of the trash incinerator in Montgomery County.

We support the resolution to approve the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan 2025-2034 with amendments. Please *reincorporate* the two regulatory options that were included in the *last* Plan:

1. supporting the bottle bill legislation, and
2. proposing local ordinances banning more materials such as single-use foodware.

If the DEP is serious about implementing waste reduction strategies, these both should be central to our Solid Waste Management plan. What was the justification for removing them?

We also want to take this opportunity to remind the Council that today's public hearing is *not* a substitute for a public hearing on the contract extension for the incinerator that the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority has negotiated on behalf of the DEP.

The DEP has still not furnished you, the County Council, with any cost justification for extending the contract or the implications to taxpayers of doing that. They have not yet answered any of the questions posed at the briefing held here by the Council two weeks ago. They also have not answered any of the questions that we sent them more than a month ago.

In order for you to reasonably and responsibly evaluate this contract extension request, you will need that information: How much will it cost to keep that aging incinerator running? How much more money will be needed to build out a new Compost Facility if the Dickerson Yard Trim facility is not used? Realistically, just how long will it take to implement Option 2c that the DEP laid out to you two weeks ago? This would be picking up our trash from Shady Grove and sending it to an acceptable landfill out of state.

Given that these questions have not been answered and that this contract extension will automatically go into effect on March 25th unless YOU act, we strongly urge you to pass a *resolution* to *deny* the contract extension and then hold a public hearing so that you then will be able to exercise your *legal authority* to prevent this contract extension. The only fiscally responsible course of action would be to deny the extension **until such time as you have all of the cost information and a reasonable timeline from the DEP**. All the scenarios that the consultant, Arcadis, presented, regardless of their *widely* varying degrees of complexity, were shown to require the *exact* same amount of time to implement: seven years. You need a proposal that *actually* reflects the reality of implementing a solution, not a generalized overview.

Thank you for taking a stand and acting on behalf of all residents of the county.

Diana Conway

Zero Waste Montgomery County

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