

June 17, 2025

Expedited Bill 15-25, Special Capital Improvements Projects – New Organics Processing Facility (P802508) – FAVORABLE

Dear Council President Stewart and Councilmembers,

My name is Advika Agarwal. I am a lifelong Montgomery County resident and current undergraduate at Johns Hopkins University writing on behalf of Sustainable Hopkins Innovative Projects (SHIP) and my youth nonprofit, Compostology, with strong support for the New Organics Processing Facility (P802508) to be constructed in Dickerson.

In the past 4 years, Compostology has been launching programs in schools that divert school food waste from incineration to recovery and compost. A key obstacle in bringing food scrap collection to all MCPS schools has been the lack of infrastructure to process organic waste within the county. Our current school programs rely on transporting food scraps to Frederick and Prince George's counties' composting facilities, which has been costly – \$200 a month per school – and releases additional emissions. Previous conversations with the Council and Board of Education have concluded that a Montgomery County organics composting facility would create the potential for returns on a county investment in countywide school composting.

Students across Maryland urge you to consider the ripple effect the Dickerson facility will have for our community. In addition to rescuing unnecessarily incinerated organic waste, Montgomery County will gain the *capacity* for its schools, households, and businesses to transform their food waste management practices. This is essential in building a sustainable and resilient food system in our county that can serve as a model to the rest of Maryland, paving an opportunity for Montgomery County to lead in piloting multiple targeted food waste management strategies.

Respectfully,
Advika Agarwal

As Hopkins SHIP and Compostology work to bring our school compost programs that have had educational and environmental benefits for Montgomery County's children to Baltimore, where educational enrichment funding has recently been severed, this ripple effect is already taking place – at the hands of students, for the benefit of students. Now, it is time for our local leaders to support

Now, it is time for our local leaders to take responsibility for environmental protection and capacity-building,
into *their hands*,

When Montgomery County builds the capacity for its food waste generators to become long-term composters via the Dickerson facility, it will become a leader in *multiple*