

STATE OF MARYLAND
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
Robert M. Summers, Ph. D., Secretary

BILL NO: SB 814

COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation

POSITION: Support with Amendments

TITLE: State Highway Administration – Compost and Compost-Based Products – Specification

BILL ANALYSIS: With the proposed amendments, SB 814 would establish the use of compost and compost-based products in State highway construction projects as a best management practice for certain pollution mitigation strategies. State Highway Administration will establish specifications by September 30, 2014 for the acquisition and use of compost and compost-based products for practices that have been approved by Maryland Department of the Environment for erosion and sediment control and post-construction stormwater management, investigate how several other state highway departments are utilizing compost, evaluate how Maryland SHA may apply this information, and report back to the General Assembly in January 2015 on their findings.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: MDE supports SB 814 with amendments.

MDE supports composting and the use of compost products to extend the life of landfills by diverting organic materials for use. Compost and compost-based products can be used to filter pollutants found in stormwater runoff and may prevent the pollutants from reaching surface water. Compost has been shown to reduce erosion and silting on embankments parallel to creeks, lakes and rivers and to reduce erosion and turf loss on roadsides, hillsides, playing fields and golf courses. MDE's Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management manuals describe practices that use compost as a component. Should the SHA review and report demonstrate that its use can be expanded while maintaining water quality, MDE will work with SHA to ensure that MDE's specifications can accommodate a proposed use of a product.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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