In 1988, the Maryland Recycling Act (MRA) (Chapter 536) mandated that Maryland reduce the overall amount of solid waste disposal in the state through improved management, education, and regulation.

- Each county, including Baltimore City, is required to develop and periodically update a recycling plan addressing certain topics.
- A county with a population greater than 150,000 is required to recycle 35% or more of its waste, and a county with a population of less than 150,000 is required to recycle 20% or more of its waste.
Waste Diversion Rates

Source: MDE – LMA, Waste Diversion and Utilization Program - Maryland State, County and City Recycling
Recycling Tonnage

Source: MDE – LMA, Waste Diversion and Utilization Program - Maryland State, County and City Recycling
Materials Recycled

MRA – RECYCLED MATERIALS BREAKDOWN - 2018

- Paper: 28%
- Compostables: 31%
- Metals: 16%
- Glass: 6%
- Plastics: 6%
- Miscellaneous: 13%

Source: County Recyclables by Commodity in Tons for Calendar Year 2018 - MDE
On June 27, 2017, Governor Hogan signed Executive Order 01.01.2017.13, *Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Plan for Maryland*. The order emphasizes collaboration across state and local agencies, the private recycling sector, and citizens in order to establish and make meaningful progress toward waste diversion goals.

The executive order establishes a sustainable materials management policy for the state as follows:

- Minimize the environmental impacts of materials management over their entire life cycles, including from product design to production, consumption, and end-of-life management;
- Conserve and extend existing in-State disposal capacity through source reduction, reuse, and recycling;
- Capture and make optimal use of recovered resources, including raw materials, water, energy, and nutrients; and
- Work toward a system of materials management that is both environmentally and economically sustainable in the long term.
• Sustainable materials management goals and metrics developed under the EO are available on MDE’s web page at: https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Pages/Waste-Reduction-and-Resource-Recovery-Executive-Order.aspx
Most recent activities are as follows....
Current and Upcoming Initiatives

- **Improved data collection and tracking**
  - Waste characterization study to identify and target the materials still being disposed in landfills (July 2017)
  - Expanded sustainable materials management goals and metrics (April 2019)
  - Efforts to encourage increased reporting of commercial recycling through online voluntary reporting (underway)

- **Diverting food scraps from disposal**
  - Composting regulations and general permit (22 operations currently permitted)
  - Organics diversion and infrastructure study (July 2019)
  - Anaerobic digestion regulatory guidance (July 2019)
  - Food waste minimization toolkit for Maryland schools (March 2020)
  - Food Recovery Summits (2016, 2018, and upcoming in December 2021)
  - New food residuals diversion requirement for certain large generators of food scraps (Ch. 439 of 2021)
• Recycling Business and Markets Development
  – Sustainable Materials Management Maryland (private sector-led group)
  – Greater coordination between Commerce and MDE on recycling business and permitting assistance
  – Sustainable materials management representative named at Commerce to assist prospective recycling businesses
  – Recycling market development
    • Viable markets and end uses for recycled materials are critical to diverting more material from the waste stream.
    • New market development program established under Ch. 289 of 2021
    • MDE’s Office of Recycling will promote the development of markets for recycled materials
      – Conduct research, make recommendations, identify market development opportunities, provide resources to businesses, establish the “Maryland is Open for Recycling Business Campaign”
QUESTIONS ...