


FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHERYL CASCIANI, CHAIR, COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY <i>CAC</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET, 8 th Floor		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 12-0104 Food Establishments – Polystyrene Products		

TO

DATE:

August 14, 2012

The Honorable President and Members of City Council
City Hall 4th floor
100 N. Holliday Street

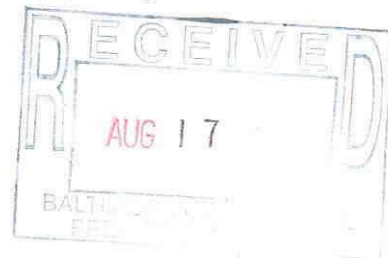
Please be advised of the following comments offered on behalf of the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability (CoS). The CoS has reviewed the **City Council Bill # 12-0104** Food Establishments – Polystyrene Products and is offering the following comments.

The Baltimore Commission on Sustainability is supportive of City Council’s efforts to remove polystyrene waste from Baltimore’s streets and waterways and believes that City Council Bill 12-0104 intends to do that. Baltimore is currently preparing for a new trash TMDL for the Baltimore Harbor, which will be implemented through the City’s MS4 permit. Polystyrene waste makes up some of the trash that must be removed from the Harbor in order to comply with the TMDL.

Baltimore is currently preparing for regulations from MDE which will create a trash TMDL as part of their MS4 water quality permit requirements, and polystyrene waste is found in the harbor and will need to be addressed in the TMDL. The Commission also recognizes that polystyrene is a containment challenge since it is not biodegradable.

During our discussion of the bill, the Commission agreed on and recommends the following:

1. The bill should reference foamed polystyrene.
2. Baltimore’s streets and Harbor are suffering from excessive trash, and foamed polystyrene is one of a number of pollutants.
3. A study of San Francisco’s ban on foamed polystyrene concluded that the overall amount of litter on the streets remained relatively constant after the ban went into effect.
4. Litter on the streets and in the Harbor are caused by human behavior, and therefore we strongly believe that any legislation aimed at reducing litter must be part of a strong outreach and education campaign designed to change citizen behavior, or the problem will not be solved.
5. Such a campaign should be coordinated with existing efforts to clean Baltimore’s streets and Harbor, such as the Healthy Harbor Initiative and DPW’s program to meet their TMDL requirements, and coupled with enforcement of penalties for violations.
6. Representatives from local businesses and the food packaging industry must take an active role in reducing the environmental impacts caused by their products and need to be involved in any Citywide campaign to reduce litter



7. Since a ban on foamed polystyrene may have an economic impact on area businesses, it will be important to understand those ramifications on local restaurants, grocery stores, food service providers, and other establishments before proceeding with a polystyrene ban.

With the above points in mind, the Commission was not prepared to support a ban on polystyrene as stated in the proposed legislation as a means for reducing litter in the City. The Sustainability Commission offers to work with City Council and the other partners mentioned above to demonstrate how a ban on foamed polystyrene might fit within a larger comprehensive strategy to stop littering.

CC:

Ms. Kaliopé Parthemos, Deputy Chief for Economic and Neighborhood Development
Mr. Alexander Sanchez, Chief of Staff
Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office
The Honorable Sharon Middleton, Council Rep. to Commission on Sustainability
Mr. Thomas J. Stosur, Director Department of Planning
Ms. Beth Strommen, Director Office of Sustainability
Ms. Karen Randle, Council Services