


F R O M	Name & Title	Dr. Leana Wen, Commissioner of Health	Health Department MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201		
	Subject	LO 17-0022R – Informational Hearing – Moving Baltimore to Zero Waste		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

May 15, 2017

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review 17-0022R – Informational Hearing – Moving Baltimore to Zero Waste. The purpose of this resolution is to discuss the development of a Zero Waste plan to Baltimore that will facilitate sustainability, improved public health outcomes, and job creation.

BCHD witnesses the impact of inefficient waste reduction and its effect on the health of City residents. As noted in the resolution, waste-to-energy incinerators create significant amounts of air pollution, which can exacerbate asthma symptoms and trigger asthma attacks. These attacks cause residents to miss school or work, increase the number of emergency room visits and hospital stays, and can require medication for treatment.

Baltimore City suffers from high rates of asthma. The state Department of Health and Mental Hygiene reports 12.4% of Baltimore City adults have asthma, four points higher than the statewide average. Moreover, 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 in Baltimore City suffer from asthma, double the national average. These high rates lead to large losses of productivity through missed school and work days. Reduced air pollution realized through a Zero Waste plan could help the city lower its asthma rates.

BCHD is appreciative of the opportunity to discuss Zero Waste at this informational hearing, and eager to receive feedback from national experts on waste reduction efforts.