

TO: Baltimore City Council Health, Environment, and Technology Committee

FROM: Ron Cummins Jr., Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, University of Maryland Medical Center

DATE: March 20, 2024

RE: City Council Resolution 23-0201R

At the heart of the University of Maryland Medical Center's (UMMC) mission lies a deep commitment to creating a healthier environment for Baltimore City and beyond. Guided by values of integrity, compassion, and excellence, UMMC recognizes its role as an anchor institution and embraces the responsibility to address environmental sustainability comprehensively. While progress has been made, our efforts are concentrated in six strategic areas to amplify our impact:

- Climate Resilience and Action
- Energy Management
- Waste Management/Reduction
- Sustainable Procurement
- Food and Nutrition
- Stakeholder/Staff Engagement

In our pursuit of becoming a more sustainable and environmentally responsible healthcare organization, UMMC is devoted to comprehensive initiatives aimed at reducing regulated medical waste, minimizing landfill/incineration use, and curtailing total waste generation. This strategic endeavor underscores our commitment to environmental stewardship and aligns with our core values of integrity, compassion, and excellence.

Regarding regulated medical waste reduction, UMMC has achieved significant progress over the last 20+ years, reducing RMW as a percentage of total waste from 75% to 10% as of December 2022. This reduction reflects substantial educational and operational efforts around appropriate waste segregation and source reduction, requiring a commitment from all levels of the organization.

To reduce landfill/incineration use, UMMC is implementing several strategies, including composting programs, initiatives to "green" our operating rooms, zero-waste programs, and improved recycling/donation efforts. Additionally, UMMC is actively developing a transition plan to explore alternative solutions for medical waste management, with the ultimate goal of eliminating medical waste incineration in Baltimore City.

Recognizing the significant impact healthcare operations can have on waste generation, UMMC is implementing targeted actions across various facets of our organization. From enhancing waste segregation practices to introducing innovative recycling and composting programs, our aim is to optimize waste management processes throughout our facilities. By engaging our staff, raising awareness, and implementing sustainable procurement policies, we aim not only to meet but exceed industry benchmarks. This nationally recognized initiative reflects our commitment to fostering a culture of responsibility, ensuring that our healthcare practices contribute positively to both community well-being and the broader health of our planet.