



Maryland HB 538 & SB 651

Environment- Expanded Polystyrene Food Service Products -Prohibition

Position: **Unfavorable**

The Maryland School Nutrition Association (MdSNA) represents the thousands of school food service employees across the State of Maryland who served over 30 million meals to students last year. As State Legislative Chair of the Association, this testimony is presented to provide them a voice.

School Cafeterias throughout the State of Maryland operate with extremely limited budgets and exercise efficiency where ever possible to control costs, including paper costs. The restriction of choice this bill entails would require districts to switch to a more expensive option, costing several thousand dollars. Because of the limitations on school nutrition program budgets, the additional cost of more expensive biodegradable trays will likely be passed directly on to the end users, the working families in the state of Maryland who may already be struggling to pay for school meals. This direct pass through of costs may prevent some needy families from participating in a vital social safety net nutrition program.

While manufacturers are catching up to the trends in the food service industry, options do remain limited. Foodservice Directors are exploring options and we anticipate the market response to offer a competitively-priced product over time.

Therefore, the Maryland School Nutrition Association requests an **unfavorable** report on HB 538 & SB 651.

Thank you for your time and attention to reviewing this testimony.

Marla LeTourneau

State Legislative Chair, Maryland School Nutrition Association