Don't Waste Our Landfill Space:
The costly impact of Styrofoam on Virginia's megalandfills

Our Landfills

- Waste companies import out-of-state waste into Virginia landfills.
- For the 8 Virginia counties with megalandfills, the waste importation industry earns counties around $2.5 to $6 million per year.
- In 2018, the waste company Green Ridge promised to increase Cumberland county’s annual revenue by 10-20% with the approval of a new landfill site.

Fact: Sussex, Charles City, Cumberland, King George, King & Queen, Gloucester, Amelia, and Brunswick County all have megalandfills

Styrofoam in our Landfills

Although expanded polystyrene (EPS), also known as Styrofoam, is made up of 95% air, EPS takes up a lot of volume. In fact, EPS makes up over 30% of all plastic waste by volume. The space-taking nature of EPS threatens to consume the limited landfill space in Virginia. With less space for the waste importation industry, Virginia counties threaten to weaken the partnerships that offer a lifeline to industrial development.

Our Policy Recommendation:
Statewide Ban on EPS Food Containers

- There are already 100+ ordinances across the United States that have banned the sale or distribution of EPS food containers.
- The entire state of Maine has enacted this ban.
- For Virginia, a ban on EPS food containers would greatly reduce polystyrene waste accumulation in landfills, to make the most use of landfill space that supports the most vulnerable counties.

Let’s not waste landfill space and dampen our economy.

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References:
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