



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 179

Maryland Recycling Act – Recyclable Materials and Resource
Recovery Facilities – Alterations

DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2020

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation supports HB 179 Maryland Recycling Act-Recycling Materials and Resource Recovery Facilities- Alterations as positive progress toward sustainable energy and recycling policies statewide. This bill repeals a county's authority to use trash incineration to achieve required reductions in its solid waste stream and excludes incinerator ash, which has been applied to landfill waste, from the definition of "recyclable materials."

Incinerator ash is the result of trash incineration, a process that emits greenhouse gases into the environment.¹ Greenhouse gas emissions threaten the Chesapeake Bay through climate change and its effects. Warmer waters have a decreased capacity to hold dissolved oxygen, exacerbating the Bay's fish-killing dead zones, squeezing fish into smaller and smaller oxygenated areas of the water column, and contributing to algal blooms.

Additional legislation in the General Assembly would remove current incentives for trash incineration from the State of Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard. This companion bill aligns recycling law with that positive shift by removing incinerator ash from its current classification as a "recyclable material," rightfully re-focusing progress on waste reduction techniques that do not rely on trash incineration, including composting and recycling.

For these reasons, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation urges a favorable report on HB 179 from the Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters Committees. Please contact Carmera Thomas, Baltimore Program Manager, at 443.482.2011 and carmerathomas@cbf.org with any questions.

¹ Thurston, George, *The Public Health Impacts of Air Emissions from the Wheelabrator Facility*, 2017, available at <https://www.cbf.org/document-library/cbf-reports/thurston-wheelabrator-health-impacts-2017.pdf>

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403
Phone (410) 268-8816 • Fax (410) 280-3513