



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Testimony on Maryland House Bill 166 Reclaim Renewable Energy Act

TO: Chair C.T. Wilson, Vice Chair Brian M. Crosby, and members of the committee

FROM: Kamal Nkele. Gaithersburg, MD

DATE: March 5, 2024

POSITION: Favorable

My name is Kamal a citizen Montgomery County Maryland and I am honored to be asked to speak here today. I moved to MD about 14 years ago and I have always been astounded by the quality if people I have met here. The people of MD are kind, caring, diverse and most of all intelligent. Additionally, I was quite surprised to see how many of the local and state politicians in MD are willing to fight for their constituents and try to do the right thing for our diverse communities. So when I learned that my hard earned tax dollars were going to subsidize dirty, cancer causing energy production in the state as renewable energy, I was very disappointed. What is even more disappointing is how few people in our communities know it is happening; How few of us know our tax dollars are paying to poison our neighbors, and in some cases, our own kids.

With that being said, I was very excited about the Moore administration coming into power. I was pumped about the fact that they told us that they supported a science backed clean energy mix for the state. One that calls for 50% renewable energy production (though I think we should be pushing for 100%) and one that “leaves no one behind” in our state. So imagine how surprised and disappointed I was last year when senate president Bill Ferguson did not bring up the RECLAIM RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT for a vote. We could have solved this problem last year. Based on what I have heard since it must have been a mistake or maybe our representatives just don’t know how wrong this is. So as a MD citizen, business owner and local ratepayer; who’s travels have given me a little bit of experience in renewable energy generation as well as climate change risks, let me say this. TRASH INCINERATION IS NOT RENEWABLE ENERGY.

I believe it is crucial for our representatives to recognize the significant misalignment in categorizing waste generation as a renewable energy source. Waste generation is not backed as a renewable energy source under any scientific standard including the Science-Based Targets Initiative as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals framework. As I said As I was very excited to hear Governor Wes and the Democratic party champion its belief in a SCIENTIFICALLY BACKED renewable energy mix and this bill represents the next and most important step so far in that journey.

Maryland has the potential to be a national and global leader in clean, scientifically backed renewable energy. We all know transitioning to cleaner energy is not just an environmental imperative but also a significant economic opportunity, and a way to ensure that our economy is resilient and ready to

capitalize on the great changes that are coming our way due to climate change. By continuing to support waste generation, we risk falling behind in the global race towards truly sustainable energy solutions. However, by taking these subsidies and investing in solar, wind, and other renewable technologies like vertical farming, we can create a sustainable closed loop energy infrastructure that's resilient, cost-effective, and beneficial for all Marylanders.

So I write this statement to say please bring the Reclaim renewable energy act up for a vote and vote YES. It is the best move for all of MD, and for our futures. Thanks.