



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Testimony in Favor of HB-166, Reclaim Renewable Energy Act

FROM: [Zack Buster](#)

DATE: March 5, 2024

POSITION: Favorable

Greetings, Chair C.T. Wilson, Vice Chair Brian M. Crosby, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. My name is Zack Buster, and I am an advocate and organizer with Progressive Maryland. I am a resident of Northern Anne Arundel County, and I have seen first-hand the environmental injustice my neighbors face in South Baltimore.

From uncovered, exploding piles of coal raining hellfire from above to toxic chemical plants poisoning our citizens, the overburdened residents of South Baltimore battle dangerous levels of pollutants every day. Today, I am writing to tell you that one of those dirty health hazards, the Bresco Waste Incinerator, is currently classified as “renewable energy” and subsidized through tax credits paid for by me, a taxpayer.

The original legislative intent of the Maryland renewable energy portfolio was to encourage cleaner energy through renewables such as wind, solar, and geothermal power. However, as it currently stands in the law, burning trash is included in that portfolio. As someone who cares about the citizens of Maryland and a strong advocate for the concept of people over profit, I was outraged to find out that part of my paycheck funds a public health hazard that is killing our brothers and sisters in South Baltimore with increased rates of asthma and cancer.

This is why I am an ally and an advocate for the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act—because this act would remove waste incineration from the renewable energy tax credit portfolio. HB-166 would bring the law more in line with the legislative intent of those elected officials who sought to make a healthier, more sustainable, Maryland for all. In doing this, the bill would not only save the state money, giving us one less tax credit to pay but also save the lives of those in communities that need our help the most.

It is for these reasons I fervently and respectfully request a favorable committee report.

In Solidarity,

Zack Buster

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“You’ve got to be a thermostat rather than a thermometer. A thermostat shapes the climate of opinion; a thermometer just reflects it.” — Cornel West