



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Members of the Economic Matters Committee
100 State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

As a concerned resident of Cheverly in the 47th district and a volunteer with the Progressive Maryland Environmental Justice Task Force, I submit this written testimony in strong support of HB0166, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act. I am also a teacher, small business owner, graduate of the University of Maryland with a Masters' in Environmental and Energy Public Policy, and rate payer, and I am tired of subsidizing dirty energy with my utility fees.

Currently, Maryland includes trash incineration in our Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS), inaccurately labeling it as a renewable energy source. In reality, trash incineration comes with significant environmental and public health risks. According to a peer reviewed study by Neil Tangri, published by PLOS Climate on June 1, 2023, "Incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity than any other power source." They also emit highly reactive and poisonous nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂) gasses, plus heavy metal pollutants like mercury and lead that increase rates of cancer, asthma, and other respiratory and neurological health maladies in neighboring environmental justice communities.¹

Maryland wastes an increasing amount of money by subsidizing trash incineration due to the market-based structure of our renewable portfolio standards (RPS). The total subsidies to trash ballooned from \$11.5 million in 2020 to \$24.7 million in 2022. As members of the Economic Matters Committee I want you to be infuriated that major companies like BRESKO, which poison people and are antithetical to our climate goals, receive any cut of the limited RPS monies that we desperately need for combating climate change and lowering air pollution.

We must redirect our resources towards real renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and geothermal. Please vote in support of HB0166 and demonstrate Maryland's commitment to clean energy, environmental justice, and a healthy future for our state.

Sincerely,

Alice Goldberg

¹ Tangri N (2023) *Waste incinerators undermine clean energy goals*. PLOS Clim 2(6): e0000100. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pclm.0000100>