



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate C. T. Wilson, Chair
Delegate Brian M. Crosby, Vice Chair
Economic Matters Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: 2/28/24
RE: HB166 - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard- Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024)

The MLLC supports HB166- Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard- Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024), 2024

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB166.

Excluding the use of energy derived from waste is crucial for maintaining a safe and clean environment. Using waste as a renewable source has negative effects on both the environment and individuals, especially individuals of color. Studies have shown that most of the individuals living in the country's most polluted environments are people of color.¹ The American Lung Association found that disproportionate exposure to pollution in the Latino community has been linked to premature death, childhood asthma attacks, and several other chronic health conditions.² A study conducted by Harvard University reinforced that air pollution in predominantly Latino zip codes is 14% higher than predominantly white areas for particulate matter and several other contaminants.³ Reducing the amount of toxic contaminants being released into the environment would significantly reduce environmental justice disparities faced by the Latino population in Maryland and could reduce the health problems that these communities are experiencing as a result of air pollution.

HB166 alters the definition of a "Tier 1 renewable source" for the purpose of excluding any energy derived from waste and refusing from being eligible for inclusion in the renewable energy portfolio standard and generally relating to the renewable energy standard. This bill considers solar energy, wind, qualifying biomass, methane from anaerobic decomposition of organic materials, geothermal energy, ocean energy, fuel cell electricity, hydroelectric power plants (of less than 30 megawatts in capacity), poultry-to-litter energy, waste-to-energy, refuse-derived fuel, energy from a thermal biomass system, and wastewater to be Tier 1 renewable sources.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB166.

¹ [Natural Resources Defense Council](#)

² [American Lung Association](#)

³ [American Lung Association](#)