



**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee**

**Testimony in Support of Reclaim Renewable Energy Act  
of 2024 – (SB 146)**

**January 25, 2024**

**Position: Favorable**

Thank you, Chair and Vice Chair, Senators Feldman and Kagan. I am Samuel Jordan - President of the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition (BTEC).

**We urge your favorable report on SB 146.**

The Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition has emphasized over the nine years of its existence that transit-reliant riders, residents who use public transit and are without access to cars, are among the members of communities most burdened by the incineration of waste and refuse. In the Baltimore region, these are communities of people of color.

When we study the work of Dr. Robert Bullard, the acknowledged "Father of the Environmental Justice Movement," we find that people of color make up 57% of residents in a two-mile radius of hazardous facilities and make up 60% of those people who live near two polluting facilities. In a study of Houston, Texas his research found that five out of five landfills in Houston were located in

Black neighborhoods, and six out of eight incinerators were in Black neighborhoods. This pattern is replicated across the nation. The environmental justice movement challenges that dominant paradigm.

While SB 146 does not shut down incinerators, it does impact the bottom line of incinerator owners and removes profitable subsidies when waste and refuse incineration is included among renewable energy sources.

Total subsidies to trash incinerators through Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard more than doubled from \$11.5 million in 2020 to \$24.7 million in 2022. This is an incredible windfall for the incinerator entrepreneurs. Yet, a new 2023 study in PLOS Climate found that "incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than any other power source" – including coal plants. We do violence to the definition of renewable energy when waste incineration is included.

On behalf of BTEC and all who deserve clean air and clear skies, drinkable water, soil without poisons, and clean energy, we urge you to support our efforts to remove incineration as a source of renewable energy and to **issue a favorable report on SB 146.**

Thank you. Samuel Jordan – Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition <Samuel.Jordan@moretransitequity.com>