

Testimony Supporting SB146
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
January 25, 2024

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Maryland District 43, a Maryland energy ratepayer, and a person increasingly affected by the climate crisis, I am writing to express my strong support of **SB146, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024**.

Last September, my north Baltimore neighborhood of Tuscany-Canterbury flooded during heavy rains. This was the first time I'd seen the Stony Run overflow its banks since I moved to a beautiful co-op apartment building here in 2009, and it was terrifying. Luckily, no one was hurt, but several cars parked on the road between us and the Stony Run were totaled, and our property required repairs. Some of our neighbors within less than three miles of us have been suffering serious flooding for years that is now becoming more frequent and dangerous.

We all know no single weather incident can be tied directly to climate change. But, as the professional climate modelers tell us, that flood in September is one more data point we can add to the global scientific consensus: Climate change is coming for us all. What is unfolding right now is in fact worse – stronger and faster – than the projections of just a few years ago.

There should be no doubt: legislators created the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) in 2004 to support the transition of our power-generating systems away from fossil fuels. And that the reason for that, in turn, was because fossil-fueled power plants are a top emitter of the greenhouse gasses that are driving our current climate crisis.

Trash incineration produces more greenhouse gasses per unit of electricity than any other power source, including coal, oil and gas. Baltimore's WIN Waste trash incinerator alone produces 640,000 tons of CO₂ per year, while siphoning millions in public money that could support real, zero-emission renewable energy. Properly addressing climate change is projected to cost our state \$1 billion a year, but as you know, the Department of Legislative Services has concluded that taking trash incineration out of the RPS would have zero impact on the state budget and very little, if any, on our energy bills. It's recommended in the [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#) that MDE released in December, and it's also recommended by the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's [2023 Annual Report](#).

Passing SB146 is not going to stop climate change. It took a lot of actions over time to create this crisis, however, and it's going to take a lot of actions to make the high-impact collective effort we must make to avoid the worst effects of climate change. The RPS was meant to incentivize real, zero-emission renewable energy. It should not be a bonus revenue stream for facilities that send hundreds of thousands of tons of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. It's time to stop wasting our money rewarding greenhouse gas emitters, and clean up our RPS.

I urge you to give SB146, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, a FAVORABLE report.

Anne C.A. Wilson (District 43A)
221 Stony Run Lane, Apt H-2, Baltimore, Maryland 21210