

Dear **Members of the Economic Matters Committee**,

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition. I am a resident of 12A. **I am testifying in support of HB0220.**



Showing Up for Racial Justice

Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard is intended to incentivize the conversion of more of our power grid to clean, renewable energy like wind and solar. Yet instead, a substantial amount of renewable energy credits come from burning trash: a method of energy generation that, far from being clean, fills the air with toxic pollutants, often in areas inhabited by the poor and marginalized who have limited ability to do anything about it, such as those who live around the Bresco incinerator. For four decades, this facility has emitted harmful chemicals that have disproportionately affected predominantly Black neighborhoods in South Baltimore, including Cherry Hill, Brooklyn, Westport, and Mount Winans, resulting in elevated rates of asthma and cancer. Instead of encouraging electricity providers to source more of their power from green sources and fostering the growth of renewable energy industries, Maryland is simply subsidizing a polluting industry at no benefit to the public.

Burning trash should never have been labeled a renewable energy source in the first place, and it is a shame and an embarrassment that year after year, we have continued this giveaway to trash incinerators in lieu of simply fixing this obvious and easily-resolvable flaw in the law. From 2012 to 2022, electricity bills paid by Maryland ratepayers contributed over \$100 million to incineration efforts. These funds ought to be directed towards genuine renewable energy sources like solar, geothermal, and hydro power. This aligns with the original intent of Maryland's renewable portfolio standard (RPS).¹ Now, when the budget crisis is forcing us to look closely at the value we are getting for every expenditure, is the perfect opportunity to make this change.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB0220 - the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025** (Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations).

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Erica Palmisano
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Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore

¹ "Report: Maryland's energy subsidies are going up in flames." peer.org. Last modified March 5, 2024.
<https://peer.org/report-maryland-energy-subsidies-in-flames/>