

Tuesday, February 18, 2025



Showing Up for Racial Justice

Dear Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am submitting this testimony as a member of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Baltimore, a group of individuals working to mobilize white people in 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 (BTEC), a community-led group whose mission is to supplant structural racism in public transit policy with structural change and to attain equitable, reliable transit and greater environmental, social, and economic justice for the Baltimore region. I am a resident of Baltimore City and District 41. I am testifying in **support of HB0220 - the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025.**

Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard is supposed to incentivize the conversion of more of our power grid to clean, renewable energy like wind and solar. Instead, a substantial amount of renewable energy credits come from burning trash, a method of energy generation that fills the air with toxic pollutants, often in areas inhabited by poor and marginalized people who have limited ability to do anything about it. It is hardly the clean energy the Renewable Portfolio Standard was intended to support. 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 that harms the public.

It hopefully goes without saying that *burning trash* should never have been labeled a renewable energy source in the first place. It is a shame and an embarrassment that year after year, we have continued to give away public funds to trash incinerators instead of fixing this obvious and easily-resolvable flaw in the law and diverting funding to actually environmentally friendly energy sources. Now that the budget crisis is forcing us to look closely at the value we are getting for every expenditure, this 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,
Dr. Katherine Blaha
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