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TESTIMONY ON HB#0220 -
FAVORABLE

Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025)

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0220, Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025)

My Jewish faith teaches me a "...halakhah (Jewish law) prohibits wasteful consumption. When we waste resources we are violating the mitzvah (commandment) of *Bal Tashhit* ("Do not destroy"). It is based on Deuteronomy 20:19-20:

"When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced."

This law was expanded in later Jewish legal sources to include the prohibition of the wanton destruction of household goods, clothes, buildings, springs, food or the wasteful consumption of anything ... The underlying idea of this law is the recognition that everything we own belongs to God. When we consume in a wasteful manner, we damage Creation and violate our mandate to use Creation only for our legitimate benefit."

We need to look at excluding energy derived from waste and refuse from being eligible for inclusion in the renewable energy portfolio standard. The use of these resources damages our environment and poses significant health risks to populations adjacent to facilities processing this waste into energy. This dirty energy should not be part of the portfolio of energy sources in a clean and healthy Maryland power generating environment. It is wasteful consumption damaging our health, our environment, and our need to create environmental justice in affected communities.

Energy produced from waste is NOT clean or renewable. The CO₂ emissions of a waste incineration facility are roughly equivalent to a natural-gas-fired power plant, with some estimates pointing to emissions like those of coal-fired energy generation. It is not clean energy.

Waste contains materials that are derived from fossil fuels, like plastics. Energy produced from waste incinerators is therefore not clean or renewable.¹

¹ https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/Why-solid-waste-incineration-is-not-the-answer-to-your-city-s-waste-problem?language=en_US#:~:text=Energy%20produced%20from%20waste%20is%20NOT%20clean%20or%20renewable

HB0220 makes a moral statement that Maryland stands for climate justice and environmental justice and is forward looking in its approach to energy generation.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0220.