

**78 Organization Sign On Testimony
Supporting HB0220
House Economic Matters Committee
February 20, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

The undersigned 78 community organizations; climate, environment, environmental justice, and economic justice groups; and businesses urge you to pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act to eliminate trash incineration from Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard and make tens of millions of additional dollars per year available to support renewable energy at no cost to the state budget.

Trash incineration is neither clean nor renewable energy. Trash incineration is among the dirtiest methods of producing electricity. [A 2023 study in PLOS Climate](#) found that "incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than any other power source" - even coal plants. Incinerators emit mercury, lead, particulate matter 2.5 and 10, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and carbon monoxide, all of which pose [significant dangers to public health](#). Including trash incineration in Maryland's RPS does not deliver clean or renewable electricity to Marylanders. It only profits companies that pollute our communities.

Maryland is wasting an increasing amount of RPS money on trash incineration, and must fix the problem before expanding the RPS. Subsidies to trash incinerators through Maryland's RPS have ballooned from \$11.5 million in 2020 to \$24.3 million in 2023 - a cumulative \$75.4 million in 4 years. These subsidies go to the ReWorld incinerator in Lorton, VA, the ReWorld incinerator in Montgomery County, and the WIN Waste incinerator in Baltimore City, all of which operated for decades before receiving this subsidy and do not rely on it to operate. This trend of increasing subsidies makes it especially urgent to eliminate trash incineration from the Renewable Portfolio Standard before any measures to increase the program's mandate for renewable energy.

Passing HB220 will make more money available for renewable energy at no cost to the state budget. As Maryland faces budget cuts, we must ensure we put money we are already spending to its best use. When Maryland passes HB220, utilities currently using incinerator RECs for Maryland RPS compliance will purchase RECs from energy sources that remain eligible for the RPS (meaning more clean energy will be supported by Maryland's RPS) or pay Alternative Compliance Payments (funding that Maryland code designates for low-income renewable energy projects). In either case, that's better than throwing money away on incineration.

Forcing ratepayers to subsidize incinerators is an environmental and economic injustice.
Passing HB220 will not negatively impact ratepayers. While trash incineration is included in the

Renewable Portfolio Standard, ratepayers are forced to subsidize incineration through their utility bills. Nearby residents harmed by pollution from incinerators are forced to subsidize and incentivize the facility harming them. Passing HB220 will end this economic injustice, and according to the [fiscal note](#) will not raise rates.

Impacted communities and local governments support HB220. Communities impacted by existing or proposed trash incinerators in Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Frederick County, and Carroll County have advocated for nearly a decade that trash incineration has no place in Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard. This year, Baltimore City Mayor Brandon Scott announced that the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act is among the [Baltimore City Administration's Supported Legislation](#). As local governments, businesses, and communities work to transition away from trash incineration and build healthier waste management infrastructure, the state government subsidizing and incentivizing incineration holds this work back.

Please pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act in 2025, invest more money in real renewable energy at no cost to the state budget, and end this longstanding environmental and economic injustice of calling trash incineration clean energy.

Sincerely,

Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition

Walkiria Pool, Co-Anchor

South Baltimore Community Land Trust

Greg Sawtell, Zero Waste Just Transition Director

Sugarloaf Citizens Association

Steven Findlay, President

Clean Water Action

Jennifer Kunze, Maryland Organizing Director

Zero Waste Montgomery County

Susan Eisendrath, Chair

Progressive Maryland

SirJames Weaver, Environmental Justice Organizer

Food & Water Watch

Jorge Aguilar, Southern Region Director

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Rebecca Rehr, Director, Climate Policy & Justice

SB7 Coalition

Michael Middleton, Executive Director

Community of Curtis Bay Association

David Jones, Edith Gerald, Mandy Memmel, Kellie Gaither, Angie Shaneyfelt, Cara Jones, Tiffany Thompson, Meleny Thomas, Greg Sawtell, Karen Mull: Community of Curtis Bay Association Board

League of Women Voters of Maryland

Linda Kohn, President

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Brittany Baker, Maryland Director

Matthew Henson Community Development Corporation

Dr. Marvin L. Cheatham, Sr, C.E.O.

Neighborhood Sun

Gary Skulnik, Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Compost Crew

Ben Parry, CEO

Community Development Network of Maryland
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Sierra Club Greater Baltimore Group
Deborah "Spice" Kleinmann, Chair

Maryland Legislative Coalition - Climate Justice Wing
Dave Arndt, Co-Chair

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Environmental Justice Ministry
Lee McNair, Member

Maryland Legislative Coalition
Cecilia Plante, Co-Chair

Sustainable Hyattsville
Greg Smith, Board Member

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Phil Webster, Lead Advocate for Climate

350.org
Taylor Smith-Hams, US Senior Organizer

Namati
Jay Monteverde, Senior Advisor, US Environmental Justice Program

Centro de Apoyo Familiar
Valeria Menjivar, Healthy Families Assistant

Gwynns Falls Community Association
Christopher Schulze, President

Friends of Sligo Creek
Kit Gage, Advocacy Director

Indivisible HoCoMD Environmental Action
Peter Alexander, Co-Facilitator

Baltimore Jewish Council
Abby Snyder, Director of Government Relations

Echotopia LLC
Diane Wittner, Principal

Coal Kills Baltimore
John Scheinman, Co-Founder

HoCo Climate Action
Liz Feighner, Steering Committee

Baltimore 350
David Neun, Founder

Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home
Bob Simon, Member, Organizing Committee

Iglesia Manantiales de Agua Viva
Jose Ayala, Minister

Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVa)
Andrea Orozco, Advocacy Lead

ACQ (Ask the Climate Question)
Karen Metchis, Chair

Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney

CASA
Jose Coronado Flores, Climate Policy Analyst

Reconnecting Communities in West Baltimore Coalition
Min. Glenn Smith, President

Mobilize Frederick
Kathy Kinsey, Chair, Government Affairs Committee

Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (MC-FACS)
Stuart Simon, Advocacy Lead

Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Caroline Taylor, Executive Director

National Aquarium
Maggie Ostdahl, Senior Conservation Policy Manager

Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOS (CCAIC)
Gabby Ross, Founder

Maryland Latinos Unidos
Carlos Orbe, Jr, Communications and Public Affairs Specialist

Climate Communications Coalition
Sonia Demiray, Executive Director

Envision Frederick County

Patrice Gallagher, Board Vice Chair

Blue Water Baltimore

Alice Volpitta, Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper

Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group

Tom Taylor, Co-Chair

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Gwen L. Dubois MD, MPH, President

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Brenda Platt, Director, Composting for Community Initiative

Environmental Justice Maryland

Zack Buster, Founder & Executive Director

Coal Free Curtis Bay

Andrew Hinz, Volunteer

Earthjustice

Susan Miller, Senior Attorney

Third Act Maryland

Cynthia Miller, Co-facilitator

Green Sanctuary, Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring

Doneby Smith, Liaison to the Montgomery County Climate Coalition

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Betsy Nicholas, Vice President of Programs and Litigation

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Karl Held, TCM Steering Committee member

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Charm City Land Trusts

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Climate Reality Greater Maryland

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Frances Stewart, Chapter Co-leader

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Out for Justice, Inc.

Trina Selden, Executive Director

Waterkeepers Chesapeake

Robin Broder, Acting Executive Director

Vernal Pool Partners

Mark Southerland PhD, Director

Safe Skies Maryland

Mark Southerland PhD, Legislative Director

Baltimore Phil Berrigan Memorial Veterans For Peace

Ellen E Barfield, Co-founder and Coordinator

Fellowship of Scientists and Engineers

Elizabeth Law, P.E. (retired), Chair

Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition (BTEC)

Samuel Jordan, President

The Crow's Nest

Leonardo Martinez-Diaz, Founder and Director

Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group

Tom Taylor, Co-Chair

Sunrise Movement Baltimore

Yara Changyit-Levin, Hub Delegate

Beyond Extreme Energy

Andrew Hinz, Volunteer