

Testimony Supporting HB0220
House Education Energy & the Environment Committee
February 20, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and Members of the Committee,

As a Maryland energy ratepayer, Baltimore City resident, and a person affected by the climate crisis, I urge your support of **HB0220, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025**.

The RPS should not serve as a bonus revenue stream for facilities that send hundreds of thousands of tons of greenhouse gasses into the air, along with pollution that directly harms human health. Yet every time I see the smoke billowing from the BRESKO incinerator, I am reminded this is exactly what's happening in my city. Trash incineration produces more greenhouse gasses per unit of electricity than any other power source, including coal, oil and gas – *adding to*, rather than reducing, greenhouse gas emissions from our power sector.

WIN Waste and Covanta testify their incinerators prevent methane emissions from landfill. The EPA's current Waste Management Hierarchy makes it plain: The better way to reduce methane emissions from landfill is to prevent food and other organic materials from reaching the landfill in the first place, and composting the rest. Our transition to composting and other healthier forms of waste management will not happen overnight, but it will happen. Maryland's laws to divert organic materials are already having a measurable impact, reducing the total volume of organic waste in our landfills and incinerators. The trash incineration industry is raising the specter of trucking our trash hundreds of miles to Virginia landfills, indefinitely, should BRESKO shut down. It's a shortsighted scare tactic that does not square with the 21st century waste management options we can develop for our communities.

BRESKO operated without the RPS from 1985 to 2004. If a polluting, greenhouse-gas-producing energy generating technology can not remain solvent without state subsidies, and we have vastly preferable options for both waste management and energy generation, then arguably that technology has outlived its usefulness on all fronts. In any case, the state should *not* be taking dollars from ratepayers that are intended to support renewable energy, just to perpetuate the lie that burning trash serves the original intention of the RPS. We can do better.

The climate crisis itself is by far the single greatest threat to our individual and collective prosperity. The Department of Legislative Services finds passing this bill would have zero impact on the state budget and very little, if any, on our energy bills. It's time to stop wasting Maryland ratepayers' dollars rewarding greenhouse gas emitters, and clean up our RPS. I urge you to **give HB0220, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, a FAVORABLE report.**

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