

**Committee:** Environment and Transportation  
**Testimony on:** HB1092 – Recycling – Prohibition on the Chemical Conversion of Plastic  
**Submitting:** Deborah A. Cohn  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** February 26, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing my testimony today in strong support of HB1092.

HB1092 excludes from the definition of recycling various forms of chemical conversation of plastic and prohibits building in Maryland facilities that convert plastic to fuel or plastic feedstock.

Advanced plastic recycling, also known as chemical recycling, refers to several chemical or heat based processes that break down plastic into its raw materials which can then be used to make new plastic products. Advanced plastic recycling is marketed to the public as a miraculous technical advance to create a truly circular economy with respect to plastic.

As the General Assembly considers removing incineration from the renewable portfolio standard, legislators need to understand that these new technological processes, like incineration, emit harmful pollutants including dioxins, furans, benzene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and hazardous waste. Advanced chemical recycling needs extremely high temperatures to break the chemical bonds in plastic so that the end products can be used to create new plastics. The energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are typically higher than that needed to create plastic from virgin materials. The plastic created through advanced recycling typically is of much lower quality than virgin plastic so that the created plastic cannot be “recycled” in the same manner again and is simply burned to create electricity.

The more direct answer to plastic pollution is to reduce the consumption and thus the production of plastic in the first place. This General Assembly and local Maryland jurisdictions have considered many ways to reduce the demand for plastic, particularly certain types of extended producer responsibility laws directed to plastic packaging.

Given the tremendous externalities of advanced plastic recycling, and the opportunities to reduce plastic consumption, I urge this Committee to issue a favorable report on HB1092.