

**Testimony Supporting HB166**  
**House Economic Matters Committee**  
**March 7, 2024**

**Position: SUPPORT**

*The following letter to the Baltimore City delegation in support of HB166 was signed by 12 community and business organizations in District 46, the district which houses the BRESKO trash incinerator in Baltimore.*

Dear Senate President Ferguson and members of the Baltimore City Delegation,

The undersigned neighborhood and business organizations in District 46 urge you to support eliminating trash incineration from Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard by passing HB166/SB146, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, in the General Assembly's 2024 session.

No source of energy that pollutes the air we breathe should be considered renewable. The BRESKO trash incinerator pollutes the air we breathe in District 46 and throughout the city every single day. A [recent study](#) found that incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than *any* other power source, and more criteria air pollutants than replacement sources of energy. Diverting renewable energy subsidies away from wind and solar to profit polluting industries like trash incineration is a terrible waste of money.

Subsidizing trash incineration also makes it harder for our local governments to transition to healthier infrastructure for managing our waste. Subsidies for trash incinerators give the companies that own them needless extra profits, making them artificially more competitive against the composting, recycling, reuse, and waste reduction initiatives and businesses that we actually need. Putting 'renewable energy' subsidies back into wind and solar power where they belong will also allow Zero Waste infrastructure to compete on an even playing field - but until we make that change, the state of Maryland is giving incinerators an economic leg up over the infrastructure we actually need.

In [2022](#), \$24.7 million of Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard subsidies went to profit trash incinerators, instead of helping develop the new wind and solar power that we need to fight climate change. The private company that operates the BRESKO trash incinerator, located here in District 46 in Baltimore City, actually received the least of the three incinerators profiting from this subsidy. The trash incinerator in Montgomery County received about twice as much money, and an incinerator in Lorton, Virginia, received three times as much subsidy from Maryland ratepayers.

As Baltimore City Comptroller Bill Henry wrote in his [testimony in support of SB146](#), “Dedicating our renewable energy funds to genuinely renewable energy is an appropriate step to steward Maryland’s climate action resources wisely and make the RPS program more environmentally just and fiscally responsible.”

The message from Baltimore is clear: it's time for Maryland to stop subsidizing polluters like BRESKO, and use that money to support real renewable energy instead. Senate President Ferguson, we hope that you and the entire City delegation will lead on finally fixing this environmental injustice.

Sincerely,

*SB7 Coalition*

*South Baltimore Community Land Trust*

*Westport Neighborhood Association*

*Harbor West Collaborative*

*Family of Ellwood Park*

*Lakeland Community Association Partnership Inc.*

*Baltimore Community Toolbank*

*Locust Point Community Garden*

*Upper Fells Point Improvement Association*

*Locust Point Civic Association*

*Echotopia LLC - Baltimore's 1st Zero Waste Biz*

*Charm City Land Trust*