



Date: February 20, 2020

Testimony of Bruce Burcat, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition
Before the House Economic Matters Committee

House Bill 98
Position: Support

I am Bruce Burcat the Executive Director of the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition (MAREC). I appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments to this Committee on House Bill 98

MAREC is an organization representing many of the leading utility-scale wind and solar developers, wind turbine manufacturers and public interest organizations that support the development of renewable energy in the region.

MAREC strongly supports HB 98, legislation that would remove mill residue, otherwise known as “black liquor” from eligibility for inclusion in the State’s Renewable Portfolio Standard as a Tier 1 resource.

We thank Delegate Davis for introducing this legislation and his hard work last year to pass our state’s ambitious increase to the renewable energy portfolio standard.

In addition to our support of cleaning up Tier 1, I want to raise our concern about an amendment offered on the Senate version of this legislation that would replace black liquor with additional credits from hydro.

The purpose of the state's RPS is to encourage development of renewable energy – ideally in the state, creating new jobs as we build new wind and solar projects. Adding hydroelectric power into Tier 1 devalues the overall RPS standard by bringing down REC prices to such a low level we wouldn't be able to sustain the types of projects the RPS was created to incentivize. Qualifying hydro projects are legacy assets, out of state projects, and have often already been the beneficiaries of additional subsidies. To truly achieve a 50% renewable portfolio standard, we need to ensure that Tier 1 RECs are protected. In terms of a sunset extension for hydroelectric power in Tier 2, MAREC understands the need for the request and does not oppose such an amendment.

MAREC recommends that the bill be voted out of committee.