

Joanna Merry
MSW Candidate
University of Maryland School of Social Work
SWCOS Neighborhood Fellow

Testimony Supporting HB438 / SB560
House Economic Matters Committee / Senate Finance Committee
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As a graduate student of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and resident of District 43, I strongly support SB 313 HB438/SB560 and the effort to remove trash incineration from Maryland’s Renewable Portfolio Standard. Burning trash is not clean energy, and Maryland’s renewable energy subsidies should be used to support truly green energy like wind and solar, not trash incineration that poisons our communities. HB438/SB560 is a necessary step in addressing our contributions to our changing climate and the threat that it imposes on our future.

Trash incineration fuels climate change. True renewable energy does not. In 2015, the Wheelabrator Baltimore incinerator emitted about twice as many greenhouse gases per amount of energy produced, on average, as each of the six coal plants located in Maryland. The data is clear that air pollutants from waste incinerators increases asthma rates, increases instances of cancer, and is a leading environmental hazard that leads to the multiple health issues in areas surrounding incineration. New clean energy development made possible by removing “waste-to-energy” incineration from the RPS would decrease carbon emissions and significantly reduce healthcare costs.

Our youth have spoken as they are rising across the globe to stand for their future. As we operated off of calculations and warnings from climate scientists, we acted as though making hard shifts to contributing factors to climate change was a future oriented approach. Over the past several years, the impending threat of inaction against climate change has become very real, visible, and tangible in its effects. In 2019, millions of youth across the globe participated in strikes from school, calling on their legislators to act on our shared global crisis. Youth are letting it be known that they are not disposable.

For all of these reasons and many more, please support HB438/SB560 and end subsidies for trash incineration in Maryland. Thank you.

Thank you for your time, your service and your consideration,
Sincerely,
Joanna Merry
MSW Candidate
University of Maryland School of Social Work
SWCOS Neighborhood Fellow