



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 15 · MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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Testimony: HB934 - Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - Sale, Offering for Sale, and Use - Prohibition
Committee: Economic Matters

Hearing Date: February 25, 2022

I am Delegate Linda Foley and I am presenting HB 934, Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - Sale, Offering for Sale, and Use - Prohibition, which would ban the sale of gas-powered leaf blowers in 2024 and ban their use in 2025. Upon passage of this bill, retailers selling gas-powered leaf blowers will need to post signage letting buyers know of this new law.

This bill is focused on creating a phased ban of gas-powered leaf blowers modeled after Washington D.C.'s new law that went into effect on January 1st of this year. This bill is joining the hundreds of other bills that have been passed in cities across the nation, and now California as well. The bill is aimed at reducing the micro and acute health impacts of gas-powered leaf blowers due to their high decibel threshold and low frequency which impacts sleep, tension, and individuals' hearts.

This bill aims to address the micro and acute health and environmental effects on our bodies and neighborhoods that gas-powered leaf blowers cause.

Across the nation, legislatures have been enacting laws that ban the sale and use of these dirty, inefficient, noisy, and annoying products. These noisemakers, along with their low frequency, penetrate walls more easily than the higher frequency of electric blowers. In fact, a gas-powered leaf blower is used in a neighborhood at 65 decibels emits a noise that can be heard up to 23 homes away from the place of use compared to just 6 homes for electric blowers.

The noise isn't just annoying, but harmful too. It is a widely established fact that being around loud noise, especially those with low frequencies, causes hearing loss, insomnia, and even heart disease. Users of these machines, often underrepresented minorities, are being put in dangerous situations that are detrimental to their health. It is not only humans that these gas-powered leaf blowers affect. Birds, frogs, are other creatures that are forced to move away from the noise, while plant life and pollinators are likely to be disrupted by their force and heat.

With the progress being made in Maryland—including Chevy Chase Village, the Town of Chevy Chase, and the Town of Somerset—and in Washington, D.C., it only makes sense that Maryland takes action. Additionally, 170, both conservative and progressive, cities and states, have taken this step to ban gas-powered leaf blowers. Recently, California passed a state-wide ban on off-road two-stroke engines that includes gas-powered leaf blowers.

These machines do more harm than good. I urge my fellow lawmakers to join the wave sweeping our nation and finally blow away these noisy, annoying, and harmful gas-powered leaf blowers. I urge a favorable report on HB934.