



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

[www.womensdemocraticclub.org](http://www.womensdemocraticclub.org)

**House Bill 0934 Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers – Sale, Offering for Sale, and Use - Prohibition**

**Economic Matters Committee – February 25, 2022  
FAVORABLE**

Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning a priority of the Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC) for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our county with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

**WDC urges the passage of HB0934, Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - Sale, Offering for Sale, and Use - Prohibition**, which creates a phased ban of gas-powered leaf blowers (GLB) modeled after Washington D.C.'s new law that went into effect on January 1, 2021. The law first bans the sale of gas-powered leaf blowers in 2024, and then 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. Over 170 jurisdictions nationwide, including the state of California; Dallas, TX; and Washington, D.C. have enacted laws that ban the sale and use of these dirty, inefficient, noisy, and annoying products. Furthermore, curbing the use of GLBs aligns with [Maryland's 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan](#) which calls for a goal of 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2030.

**HB0934** would reduce climate, environmental and acute health impacts from the use of GLBs. This noisy equipment operates at a low frequency which penetrates walls more easily than the higher frequency of electric blowers. In fact, a GLB 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.

A compilation of [studies](#) reinforced the fact that low-frequency noise is a powerful stressor. The most cited effects on human health refer to [emotional changes such as annoyance](#), agitation, and [distraction](#). In addition to cognitive alterations, the development of [cardiovascular diseases](#), [sleep disorders](#), high blood pressure, and more recently, the effects of industrial low-frequency noise on dental wear are also associated with the effects of low-frequency noise. In short, noise generated by GLBs disrupt our work, interferes with children's schooling, and lowers quality of life. Leaf blower operators, often underrepresented minorities, are being put in dangerous situations that are detrimental to their health. In addition, GLBs force birds and frogs to move away from the noise, while plant life and pollinators are disrupted by their force and heat.

In addition to the noise impacts, GLBs emit large quantities of harmful air pollutants. They generate particulates which are inhaled by equipment operators and nearby residents and contribute to



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regional air pollution problems. GLBs emit significant quantities of ozone-forming chemicals, carbon monoxide, and other toxic air pollutants. GLBs also generate CO<sub>2</sub> at a rate of 3 to 9 times higher than electric-powered blowers, contributing to climate change effects. For example, one hour of operation of the best-selling commercial GLB emits the same smog-forming pollution comparable to driving a 2016 Toyota Camry about 1,100 miles (approximately the distance from Washington DC to Miami, Florida.)

This type of pollution causes, or contributes to, premature mortality, cardiovascular disease, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer, premature births, and other adverse health impacts. Even short-term exposure can be harmful. Children, seniors, people with chronic illness, and landscape workers are at greatest risk. Battery-powered leaf blowers emit much lower quantities of air pollutants. A statewide phase-out of GLBs will give us cleaner, quieter, and safer communities. A vast amount of leaf blowers are being used in suburbs that neighbor Washington, D.C. Chevy Chase Village, the Town of Chevy Chase, and Somerset, have all passed bills modeled after D.C.'s bill. It makes sense that Maryland takes similar action to D.C. since landscapers often work in both regions.

These machines do more harm than good. **HB0934** is a micro measure with macro impact. **For these reasons, WDC urges a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB0934.**

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano  
President