

In favor of Maryland HB 934, and suggesting that the start-date be sooner:

Thank you for planning to ban gas-powered leaf blowers. This ban will protect landscape workers from hearing loss and noxious fumes, and protect the quality of life for all of us.

Leaf blower noise assaults me: when a team of blowers is within 15 or 20 houses of mine, I can't think, can't talk with friends and family, and can't do my work as a classical musician (composing and teaching). I don't have an alternative: I cannot work wearing ear plugs or using "mute" on zoom. At times when I was not working, I tried ear plugs and headphones, but they did not block the leaf-blower noise. I am trapped.

A ban on leaf-blowers would be a way of saying that neighbors should treat each other with decency, not just greed.

The HB 934 ban will bring Maryland in line with our neighbors in Washington, DC who have already banned gas-powered leaf blowers. And of course, the ban would bring us together with people in other parts of the US who have already banned the blowers, including the state of California.

Rakes provide our best alternative, and create jobs. But electric powered leaf blowers are a reasonable compromise. Your ban would not take away the people's freedom to use a leaf-blowing machine.

Gas-powered leaf blowers have a more penetrating noise than the battery-powered equipment. This is not just a matter of decibels, but of pitch: the low sound of the gas-powered motors goes farther and penetrates walls much more than the battery-powered sound.

You should move up the date that your ban goes into effect. Lawn companies in Maryland who also work in DC are already switching over their equipment, which will also help them comply with existing bans in the Maryland towns of Somerset, Chevy Chase Village, and the Town of Chevy Chase. There are various rebate plans already in effect for people who trade in a gas-powered leaf blower for a battery-powered one.

You will see a lot of public support for a ban. Quiet Clean Montgomery has a petition asking for a leaf blower ban with almost 7000 signatures from Montgomery County alone. In recent months, there have been articles opposing gas-powered leaf blowers in the New York Times, the Guardian, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post (plus an article in the Atlantic a few years ago).

There is momentum for a leaf-blower ban. I want to say, "the State of Maryland should be a leader," but so many jurisdictions have already banned the gas-powered leaf-blowers. Maryland should join in.

Thank you.

Jessica Krash in Montgomery County