

## Testimony Regarding the harm from Gas Powered Leaf Blowers

I'm writing today in support of limitations on gas powered lawn equipment. (HB0934) This is desperately needed in our state, at least in the densely populated areas. I live in Montgomery County and have been a resident of Kensington (zip 20895) since 2004. I will briefly discuss why I hope the state of Maryland will take action now against gas powered lawn equipment. There are basically 3 reasons: the harm to the environment, the harm from the exhaust to human beings, and the noise pollution.

As Delegate Foley and many others have noted, gas powered leaf blowers are not environmentally friendly. To borrow a quote, if men were angels, no restrictions on these machines would be necessary. But some homeowners have no sense of responsibility to the environment or their neighbors, so restrictions are *absolutely necessary*. Here is my experience: I live next to a home with a large backyard and the homeowners aspire to recreate a PGA golf course. This is their right, obviously, but the pursuit of perfect turf means that the entire neighborhood is subjected to nearly constant leaf blowing when the landscapers are working, which is most of the year. Normally, the landscaping begins in March and only ends in December; however, this year, the leaf blowing by the landscapers (Moyers Lawn Service) began on February 21, 2022. It lasted for 3 whole days! The men who were landscaping use multiple gas powered leaf blowers for hours on end. The neighbors maintain a 2 colored mulch path which is blown into perfect shape by the landscapers. The neighbors dislike twigs on their driveway so the landscapers use gas powered leaf blowers *every single time* the grass is mowed; it is mowed twice a week beginning in April and ending in October. The neighbors cannot tolerate random pieces of nature on their walk so *every single time* the grass is mowed, the landscapers use gas powered leaf blowers to blast away nature from the walkways.

In short, the use of gas powered leaf blowers is unregulated and excessive. There is NO CONCERN for the environment, or the neighborhood, in the pursuit of the perfect lawn.

Secondly, please note that gas powered lawn equipment emits lots of harmful exhaust. I wonder whether the men (usually young men) operating these machines have health insurance. After hours of leaf blowing, *our yard stinks from exhaust*. I cannot imagine the harm done to the lungs of those working the machines, day after day, in pursuit of perfect lawns. Sadly, there are so many alternatives to these stinky gas powered machines. My husband and I use a battery-operated leaf blower (in the fall). Others use electric leaf blowers. The point is: MARYLAND CAN DO BETTER! There are alternative ways to clean up lawns, patios, driveways, and decks.

Finally, there is the noise pollution created by the constant leaf blowing. If people restrained themselves and only used gas powered leaf blowers in the fall, it would be tolerable. But this is NOT the case. Moyers lawn service uses noisy leaf blowers early in the morning and 10

months of the year. They even use gas powered leaf blowers to move small amounts of snow off the driveway! They will use gas powered leaf blowers in the rain, and when it's damp, even though leaf blowing doesn't work well under these conditions. As I walk around Montgomery County, there are many landscaping businesses that use multiple gas blowers for most of the year. The noise is inescapable and aggravating. My family and I have been subjected to hours of noisy leaf blowing on several Federal holidays including Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day. Please note that it's nearly impossible to successfully bring the noise to the attention of the police because it is difficult to measure the decibels without special equipment.

For all these reasons, I hope the state of Maryland will provide some reasonable restrictions, or an outright ban on gas powered lawn equipment. I, and many other residents, have no other means of getting help. Please do the right thing! Thank you for your consideration.