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March 7, 2023

The Honorable Chair C.T. Wilson
The Honorable Vice Chair Brian Crosby
Maryland General Assembly, House Economic Matters Committee
Room 231 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 718 – Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Eligible Sources – Alterations
(Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)

Dear Chairman Wilson and Vice Chair Crosby:

I am writing to ask for parity among Tier 1 renewable sources in your consideration of House Bill 718 and all other renewable energy legislation. The proposed bill was introduced with the express purpose of repealing the ability for renewable energy from the anaerobic digestion of poultry litter and biomass to qualify to participate in Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS).

To effectively address environmental challenges now, Maryland's RPS needs to include diverse solutions and resources that can start working together today and affect measurable change quickly. Anaerobic digestion is a key tool to further enhance the sustainability efforts underway by our farmers. Maryland can increase competitiveness with other states including California, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington that have long included anaerobic digestion of animal manures and other biomass as an important part of their renewable energy strategies. We need to keep all options on the table to meet our state's climate and energy objectives.

Maryland relies on natural gas for 36% of in-state electricity production, and as President Biden said in his recent State of the Union address, we still need gas as a bridge fuel to a net-zero emission future. If gas is still necessary, then it is best if that gas be delivered from a renewable source through anaerobic digestion.

CleanBay Renewables is a Maryland enviro-tech company founded in 2013 focused on sustainable management of agricultural byproducts using combined anaerobic digestion and nutrient recovery technologies to recycle poultry litter and create renewable energy at utility scale. Our unique process recycles more than 150,000 tons of chicken litter annually from local farms into biomethane which can then be injected into a pipeline for home or transportation use, converted into green hydrogen, or used to power electric vehicles. CleanBay's closed-system, zero liquid discharge facilities are a complete solution to address existing agricultural byproducts with no residual waste and no incineration required.

Our technology to recycle poultry litter is as clean as solar and wind generation, yet in addition to creating clean baseload renewable energy we also create a natural fertilizer that can replace synthetic fertilizers here and throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our technology presents Maryland with the opportunity to divert an abundant byproduct of local farms, create the sustainable and baseload energy our state needs, and improve the health of local air, soil, and water.





At full capacity, each CleanBay facility can produce 750,000 MMBTU of sustainable renewable natural gas. That is enough renewable gas to power about 11,000 homes each year. Each CleanBay plant will reduce the carbon equivalent of more than 500,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) annually when compared with current litter management practices. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, this would be the same as removing more than 400,000 gasoline powered cars from the road each year. Our process also produces 100,000 tons of natural, controlled-release fertilizer with granules that give farmers a nutrient-rich alternative to synthetic fertilizer and raw manure while addressing concerns about nutrient loading from phosphorous or nitrogen.

There is an opportunity to promote meaningful in-state economic development by incentivizing clean renewable energy technology companies to locate and grow in Maryland. We ask that renewable energy diversity remain viable, and that any legislation working to incentivize more renewable energy projects and expand the market for renewable energy credits include biomass or biogas from poultry litter using anaerobic digestion. Renewable energy diversity is what is needed as we transition away from fossil fuels toward net-zero carbon goals. Our state's agricultural sector can contribute to our renewable energy mix.

We cannot support this legislation as introduced since it ignores the multitude of environmental, economic, and agricultural benefits that our facilities will provide. When you think about ways to improve our environment and address impacts of climate change, realize that it is not just about powering our energy needs from renewable sources; we must also focus on removing or repurposing carbon, methane, nitrous oxide, and other greenhouse gas emissions from our air, and finding new solutions to address age old environmental challenges. CleanBay Renewables can provide renewable energy while also removing harmful emissions, providing natural fertilizer that can replace synthetic fertilizer, and generating jobs.

Today, many new clean energy technology companies like ours are working on sustainable resource management and clean energy innovation in our state. Now is the time to signal to investors that newer clean energy options are also part of the solution to meet our state's energy consumption needs. We ask that you keep energy derived from poultry litter in our RPS and oppose these changes as they would have a negative effect on the state reaching its RPS and net-zero goals. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas Spangler
Executive Chairman, CleanBay Renewables