

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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Councilwoman Phylicia R. L. Porter District 10

MEMBER:
Public Safety and Government Operations
Education, Workforce, and Youth
Health, Environment, and Technology

Councilwoman Phylicia Porter's Testimony Supporting HB718 **Economic Matters Committee** **March 6, 2023**

Delegate C. T. Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 0718 Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

As Councilwoman for the City of Baltimore's Tenth District, I am writing to express my support for House Bill 0718 Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard and the necessary push to alter language in the renewable energy portfolio standard specifically regarding "qualifying biomass", "thermal biomass system", and "Tier 1 renewable source". First, I would like to thank the community for the indulgence to support my communities during today's meeting. Second, as a public health scientist and local elected official, there are key public health challenges and harms that my communities face each and every day. It is my hope that my presence today, despite my written testimony, is an indicator of the courage, preservation, and importance of us as legislators to ensure that our communities are healthy from an air, water, and energy. As a public health scientist and local elected official, there are key public health challenges and harms that my communities face each and every day.

I support House Bill 0718 and the overall purpose of the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023 because it provides us with the unique opportunity to reimagine and reallocate the subsidies for a just, thoughtful, economically viable and forward-thinking transition to renewable energy. The City of Baltimore is igniting the political will in all levels of government from the Mayor of Baltimore to the full utility of my Council office in favorable recommendation for House Bill 0718.

For generations, families of South Baltimore have gathered, built community, and labored. However, they have done so in the presence of over sixty facilities handling hazardous or toxic materials and producers of pollution. The harsh environmental conditions perpetuated by cumulative impacts have resulted in neighborhoods in my district such as Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, and Hawkins Point being the 3rd least healthy neighborhood cluster in Baltimore City. Despite being disproportionately affected by countless social and environmental injustices, the environmental justice community has sought strategic and sustainable solutions and most importantly deserve stronger environmental and land use policies.

Using clean, renewable energy is one of the most important actions you can take to reduce your impact on the environment. Electricity production is our #1 source of greenhouse gases, more than all of our driving and flying combined, and clean energy also reduces harmful smog, toxic buildups in our air and water, and the impacts caused by coal mining and gas extraction. This is a global problem, and also a local environmental justice issue—air and water pollution from fossil use and extraction disproportionately affects local disadvantaged communities located near those facilities. But replacing our fossil-fuel infrastructure will take time—and strong, consistent support from both state and federal mandates to build renewable energy generation and demand for clean energy from consumers and businesses. Reviewing opposing arguments, economics is a main

source of contention. However, as we have seen many times throughout history, political will with actionable benchmarks are critical to execution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phylicia R.L. Porter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most legible part.

Phylicia R.L. Porter MPH, MSL
Councilwoman, Baltimore City Council, District 10