



**HoCoClimateAction.org**  
Howard County, Maryland

**HB718/SB590: Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)**

**Hearing Date:** March 9, 2023

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegates Stewart

**Committee:** Economic Matters

**Submitting:** Liz Feighner for Howard County Climate Action

**Position:** Favorable

[HoCo Climate Action](#) is a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing more than 1,400 subscribers. It is also a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#).

Howard County Climate Action supports HB718/SB590, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023. In order to meet our climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland, we need to have a truly Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). Maryland's current RPS considers burning trash, burning wood, and producing methane from chicken manure all as "renewable energy". This bill reforms the current RPS and will eliminate three types of energy from Maryland's RPS: trash incineration, woody biomass, and factory farm methane gas. Subsidies for energy sources that pollute the environment, harm nearby communities' health, and contribute to climate change cost Maryland ratepayers and do not belong in a renewable energy standard.

Beyond the climate polluting gases, many dirty energy sources produce a host of other toxic gases and pollutants. Incineration is the most notorious dirty energy offender and increases the risk of preterm births, cancers of the blood and lung, and emergency room visits. Poultry litter(manure)-to-energy facilities would not solve nutrient runoff problems from farm waste; they would exacerbate it. Woody biomass incineration emits high levels of particulate matter (PM), nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO2), lead, mercury, and other hazardous air pollutants.

Maryland ratepayers contributed over \$32 million to subsidize these dirty energy sources in 2019 alone, over \$200 million since 2008 through Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). These dirty energy sources are overwhelmingly located outside of Maryland, meaning that Maryland ratepayers' money is flowing out of state - \$108 million to dirty energy sources since 2008 in Virginia alone. On average these RECs are more expensive than an equivalent REC from truly clean sources like geothermal, solar, and wind.

Maryland cannot afford another year of throwing our "renewable energy" money away on polluters, so please support the HB718/SB590 - Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023.

Howard County Climate Action

Submitted by Liz Feighner, Steering and Advocacy Committee

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

[HoCoClimateAction@gmail.com](mailto:HoCoClimateAction@gmail.com)