



March 7, 2023

Both the Wicomico Environmental Trust (WET) and the Friends of the Nanticoke River (FNR), environmental nonprofits based on the Eastern Shore, **oppose HB 718** because it would remove anaerobic digestion and similar technologies from the renewable portfolio standard.

There are combustion technologies that WET and FNR consider unfavorable for environmental health, including open incineration of waste and harvesting of forest products for the purpose of producing pelletized wood to burn for the production of heat.

However, it would be a mistake to eliminate anaerobic digestion or similar technologies. Modern anaerobic digestion operations are closed systems with zero emissions, capture methane that replaces fracked methane, and produce compost. Pyrolysis operates similarly to produce beneficial biochar. Both reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions as well as water pollution, compared to the disposal of biomass in landfills or through open incineration. This technology is well established in Europe and at other US locations, with hundreds of anaerobic digestion facilities that process biomass safely and effectively.

We disagree with the suggestion that anaerobic digestion and similar technologies will harm the environment. In addition to being inconsistent with experience and scientific evidence, this position disregards the fact that biomass from farms, food waste, and many other sources will need to be dealt with as sustainably as possible. "Reduce, reuse, recycle" will be necessary but not sufficient here.

We urge the committee to oppose this bill in its current form.

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President, Wicomico Environmental Trust

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President, Friends of the Nanticoke River