



March 7, 2023

Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Eligible Sources – Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023) - HB0718

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairperson Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

Blue Water Baltimore is a nonprofit organization with a mission to restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. **We write today in strong support of the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act (HB0718).**

Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) is intended to provide subsidies for clean energy sources in order to accelerate our transition away from fossil fuels. However, Maryland's RPS currently includes energy sources that themselves emit greenhouse gasses. We are in a climate crisis. We cannot afford to be spending our state's "renewable energy" resources on facilities that pollute. Now is the time to double down on Maryland's commitment to truly renewable energy and only subsidize facilities that are emissions-free.

This bill will eliminate three types of energy from Maryland's RPS: trash incineration, woody biomass, and factory farm methane gas. All three of these pollute the environment, harm nearby communities' health, and contribute to climate change. Trash incineration is particularly harmful in the Baltimore communities where we work due to the BRESCO incinerator in Westport.

Frontline communities in South Baltimore successfully fought off an additional incinerator proposed for the area and have continued to lead efforts for a just transition to zero waste. Subsidizing incinerators like BRESCO that are actively causing harm to communities and the environment is a slap in the face to the people living with the health impacts of incineration and working tirelessly to build better waste management systems. And subsidizing these polluting facilities takes money away from the real renewable energy that we need, making the RPS far less effective.

It is past time for Maryland to pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act and stop sending Maryland's renewable energy money to facilities that harm our communities and the environment. We urge a favorable report on HB718.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taylor Smith-Hams".

Taylor Smith-Hams
Advocacy & Outreach Senior Manager