



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

March 23, 2023

TO: The Honorable Brian Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment

FROM: Marc Elrich  
County Executive

RE: House Bill 161, *Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority – Evaluation, Termination of Bond Authority, and Assumption of Functions, Employees, and Contracts (Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act)*

---

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 161, *Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority – Evaluation, Termination of Bond Authority, and Assumption of Functions, Employees, and Contracts (Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act)*.

The bill prohibits the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (NMWDA) from issuing bonds beginning June 1, 2023. In addition, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) must conduct an evaluation of the NMWDA, including an analysis of whether: (1) the NMWDA is fulfilling its statutory purpose; (2) continuing the NMWDA is in the public interest; (3) the NMWDA and its operations have led to a reduction in waste sent to incinerators and landfills, higher recycling rates, and costs savings; and (4) another entity, such as the Maryland Environmental Services (MES), is better able to perform the NMWDA's duties and functions. DLS must also recommend whether any changes should be made to State law to improve the NMWDA's operations or whether the NMWDA should be merged into the MES or other appropriate entity.

I strongly support House Bill 161 and the commitment reflected in the bill to reach closure on the question of whether the MES should absorb the NMWDA. Overall, I believe that such a merger should take place, to better focus all our collective efforts on the environmental impacts of climate change and how those impacts should be immediately addressed. The NMWDA was created to support the construction and operation of waste incinerators in Maryland. The need for incinerators has been superseded by other trash disposal strategies. Counties that had incinerators either closed them or have indicated a desire to close them. As counties are moving away from incineration as a method of disposing of solid waste, the services of the NMWDA are no longer needed.

I respectfully request that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee give House Bill 161 a favorable report.

cc: Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee