



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

P.O. Box 6988 Largo, MD 20792
www.ProgressiveMaryland.org
Contact@ProgressiveMaryland.org
Facebook.com/ProgressiveMaryland
@Progressive_MD

**Testimony Supporting Maryland Senate Bill 590
Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations
(Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)**

TO: Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Christianne Marguerite, Director of Communications at Progressive Maryland

DATE: February 27, 2023

POSITION: Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my **strong support for SB590**. The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act will make sure that our subsidies for renewable energy through the Renewable Portfolio Standard are going toward actual renewable energy, not being wasted on things that emit greenhouse gasses. The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act seeks to eliminate three types of energy from Maryland's RPS: trash incineration, woody biomass, and factory farm methane gas. We are in a climate crisis, and we cannot afford to be spending our renewable energy money on facilities that pollute. Now is the time to double down on Maryland's commitment to truly renewable energy and subsidize only facilities that are emissions-free. Please pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act so that those funds can support new wind and solar power instead.

Trash incineration in Baltimore City, where I live, has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color living near the incinerator. The air pollution from this source has caused an increase in preterm births, blood and lung cancers, and emergency room visits. Furthermore, the process of burning trash creates dioxins, declared by the World Health Organization as a known human carcinogen and linked to diseases of the immune system, endocrine system, nervous system, and reproductive system.

A Chesapeake Bay Foundation commissioned study identified that fine particulate matter emitted from the Wheelabrator Baltimore "waste-to-energy facility" causes over \$55 million in adverse health effects annually. This is especially concerning considering these communities historically had not been granted access to adequate healthcare resources to address these problems or the equitable financial means to cover medical expenses.

In light of this evidence, it is clear that eliminating subsidies for trash incineration from Maryland's RPS is essential for keeping these communities safe and healthy against further harm from polluting energy sources. Additionally, it would allow local governments to focus more on methods of waste management that are better for the environment than incineration and landfill.

I'm looking to your leadership to help put an end to these toxic subsidies so we can create a brighter future. For these reasons, **I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB590** to stop sending Maryland's renewable energy money to facilities that are harming our communities. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Christianne Marguerite