

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

*As a resident of District 46 and a Maryland ratepayer and a representative of South Baltimore Community Land Trust and a resident concerned about climate change because of the effects it has on human health.* South Baltimore serves as a dumping ground for the city and region - burning single use-plastics and other mixed waste at a 35 year old trash incinerator located in frontline environmental justice (EJ) communities. South Baltimore is one of the highest zip codes with the highest levels of toxic air emissions in the nation. We really need a just transition to zero waste and to do that we need the state to stop giving RECS subsidies to trash incinerators.

That is why I am writing to express my strong support of SB590, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act. This bill 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. 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.

Baltimore City leadership have made a commitment to moving from burning to developing new infrastructure such as composting which would address 40% of the waste that is currently being burned. The problem is all of Maryland subsidies are going to dirty energy and not being used to develop and support things like wind and solar power. The BRESKO incinerator has been in Baltimore for 35 years and just began to get subsidies from the RPS in 2011 so this bill will not shut them down. This bill will just assure we are supporting clean energy and not dirty energy like trash incineration.

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. Subsidizing them takes money away from the real renewable energy that we need, and it also tilts waste markets toward the worst methods of managing our waste. Subsidies exist to support the things we want, so why are we subsidizing things we don't want in our communities? Let's put those subsidies toward wind and solar power, and let the waste sector work on managing waste.

Please pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act so that those funds can support new wind and solar power instead.