

Bill for renewable energy

Testimony on Maryland SENATE Bill SB0590:

Constitutional Amendment - Environmental Rights

TO: Senator Young, Chair, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Sharif, Progressive Maryland Environmental Justice Campaign

DATE: February 27th, 2023

POSITION: SUPPORT

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony for SB0590. I have recently joined the Progressive Maryland organization in hopes of putting my best foot forward in helping to reduce the environmental injustices that have plagued my Cherryhill neighborhood, as well as other disinvested communities. Decades of industrial waste have been thrown into our environments causing our areas to become brownfields versus areas being reconstructed and or built up, given proper resources other communities don't get a chance to receive. Mind you this is only one of the many historical or systematic injustices that have served against communities such as ours. I strongly urge you to reconsider this bill creating a better environmental future for generations to come.

I am 29 years old and have lived in Cherryhill since I was 5. Even though I wasn't fully aware of the damage that the incinerator caused I knew of what it wasn't doing indirectly without a doubt. I live on a block that's full of homeowners and families that have been in the area for 2 or more generations. It is safe to say most of the people that live on my block are homeowners. Over time I have seen many of my older relatives or family friends on Hillview Rd pass from causes such as cancer, respiratory diseases, and other issues. These are the symptoms that I'm aware of from those that were immediately around myself and my family. I myself have type 1 diabetes since diagnosed at the age of 6. After being able to conduct my own research about the systemic and historical events in Baltimore that have amplified and created not just metaphysical but physical boundaries lines and areas of disinfected communities for our people.

Theories such as the "Butterfly" effect or "L" theory excuse me if I incorrectly named them but show how communities of color are being greatly affected due to displacement and disinvestment over time. Those affected have experienced decades of mental and physical disparity in their neighborhoods. I only bring this to your attention because all these things have played a role in the shaping of our communities as time has progressed. Being able to do community service for "Canoe & Scoop" at the Waterview boat

house was a great experience but it also puts a lot into perspective in our own community. I remember during this time the water wasn't deep in certain areas and you literally could see the grime, sludge, and chemicals that were in the water as we picked up/towed it was very alarming.

I support this environmental cause because it isn't just for the ones present but also for our next generation. Our future generations will have to deal with the health circumstances that plague some of us to this day. If we can come together to create changes such as this one step by step, we will be able to rebuild and uplift our disinvested communities all around Baltimore and create a better future for the generations to come. We shouldn't have to argue or debate over the importance of having clean water, breathing fresh air without chemical pollutants, or dealing with the severe health cases due to the issues of our demographic location. We all as people deserve more from one another and I genuinely hope you support this bill to end the incinerator.

Respectfully,
Sharif, Member
Environmental Justice Campaign