



February 27, 2023

Committee | Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony | SB0590 - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)

Position | Favorable

Hearing Date | February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Feldman and Distinguished Committee Members,

I am Staci Hartwell, Chair of the Environmental and Climate Justice Committee of the NAACP Maryland State Conference. Our State Conference supports SB0590 which will ensure Maryland is producing renewable energy from truly renewable sources.

Burning trash does not produce clean, green, nor renewable energy.

Here in Maryland, we have two waste incinerators- one in Baltimore and another in Montgomery County. Baltimore's Wheelabrator Trash Incinerator is in the heart of Baltimore City, and it burns almost 2,250 tons of waste per day¹ the lion's share of the waste-to-energy production in our state. The harmful process of burning household and commercial waste emits carbon dioxide, particulate matter, lead, cadmium, mercury, and other toxic substances into the air. Baltimore's facility has been documented to cause a long list of adverse health impacts for residents in and near the area including decreased lung function, increased numbers of asthma and heart attacks, more frequent emergency department visits, and 5.5 additional deaths per year.² Incineration by-products have even been linked to higher rates of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, breast cancer, testicular cancer, and preterm births.³

State funding of this harmful, toxic, polluting facility is a tremendous environmental injustice. Environmental justice groups have been advocating for this change for years. Even last year, there were many pieces of legislation - 2022 HB11 and the Climate Solutions Now Act (CSNA) - that were supposed to remove this dirty facility from the state's list of renewable sources. If we are to achieve the goals set forth in CSNA, we cannot continue to wait on this change while our state is already in transition making important strides towards a clean energy system.

We must act now. We must be resolute. We must be brave.

¹ "Waste of Energy" Grist. December 12, 2018. [link](#)

² Written Report of George D. Thurston, "Public Health Impacts of Air Emissions from the Wheelabrator Facility". November 20, 2017. [link](#)

³ "Hazardous waste and health impact: a systematic review of the scientific literature" L. Fazzo et al. October 11, 2017. [link](#)

Tier 1 sources should only include truly renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal power. We must “belly up” and make the transition; we must face reality, make hard decisions, and act.

Therefore, on behalf of the NAACP Maryland State Conference, I request a favorable report on SB0590.

Respectfully submitted,



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