



Maryland Arborist Association, Inc.

Danielle Bauer Farace
Executive Director

HB 0399 – Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - State Purchase and Use – Prohibition

Committee: Health and Government Operations
MAA Position: **OPPOSED**

Date: February 27, 2023

The Maryland Arborist Association, Inc. (MAA) works to promote the importance of proper tree care, education in the field of arboriculture, and support the accomplishments of arborists. Our members use leaf blowers on a regular basis and have significant concerns related to HB 0399 and the precedent that it would set for the industry within the state of Maryland. The passage of this bill could lead to subsequent consequences that would be harmful to tree care companies in the state of Maryland due to the cost of replacement and loss of efficiency.

Price estimates show that commercial electric leaf blowers retail between \$280-400. For small businesses that will need to purchase multiple units to replace their current gasoline-powered leaf blowers to comply with this bill, this would be a considerable expense. Compounding that replacement cost is the additional cost to installation of charging stations, purchasing additional backup batteries, managing proper battery disposal, and the need for specialized parts and service. Additional batteries can cost over \$1,000 per battery and are increasingly hard to come by as with many products due to current supply chain issues.

When comparing the efficiency of gasoline-powered leaf blowers versus their electric alternatives, users see a decrease in both blowing power and air velocity. Furthermore, battery-powered leaf blowers have a shorter run-time as well as added charging time. This loss of efficiency results in the need for additional man hours and an increased cost for clients. Our industry is already facing a labor shortage, this bill will generate the need for more labor to complete the same job.

Due to the precedent that it would establish for this valuable piece of equipment to Maryland's tree care industry, MAA requests your unfavorable report on HB 0399.

Sincerely,

Danielle Bauer Farace
Executive Director

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