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BILL HB399: Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers — State Purchase and Use — Prohibition

My name is Lynda DeWitt, and as a landscape professional, I strongly support House Bill 399. I've been using battery-powered equipment, including blowers, since 2009, when I started Solar Mowing, a quiet, emission-free lawn care company based in Bethesda.

Now in our 15th year, we've never had an advertising budget. People seek us out; they're hungry for solutions to all the problems linked to gasoline-powered lawn equipment. Gasoline leaf-blowers are uniformly hated because of their deafening noise, smog-forming fumes, and CO2 emissions. They also erode topsoil, dry out garden beds, and harm plants and pollinators.

Besides all that, they are completely unnecessary!

The argument that electric leaf blowers can't do the job of their gasoline counterparts is flat-out wrong. We use powerful hand-held electric blowers to clear debris from walkways and other hardscapes. And backpack electric blowers for leaf cleanups in the fall, which are effective even on damp leaf piles on grass.

The Government needs to take the lead in cutting emissions if we are to meet goals set by the Climate Solutions Now Act: 60% reduction below 2006 levels in fossil-fuel emissions by 2031 and net-zero emissions by 2045. A private company like mine* needs to have supporting partners in Local and State Governments.

This Bill doesn't go as far as I'd like it to go, but it's a critical first step. Please act to promote all battery-powered lawn care equipment; doing so will protect workers and children playing outside and prevent disruptions to people working and studying inside.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.

* Solar Mowing has recently joined Sust (livesust.com) in an effort to serve more MD households and businesses, seeking sustainable lawn and garden care.