

**Sharon Lawrence**

**HB1193- Coal Combustion By-Product**

**Position: FAVORABLE (with sponsor amendments)**

**Hearing Date March 7, 2024**

Dear Chairman Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Sharon Lawrence, I am a member of the Board of Directors for the Livingston Woods HOA, and I am submitting this my written support for HB1193-Coal Combustion By-Products. This bill represents a unique opportunity for Maryland to not only address the environmental challenges posed by coal ash but also to harness its potential for economic growth and job creation through recycling and reuse initiatives.

For decades, Maryland has grappled with the aftermath of burning coal, a practice that has left behind millions of tons of coal ash containing hazardous pollutants. These pollutants, including arsenic, lead, mercury, and others, pose serious risks to public health, causing cancer heart diseases, reproductive issues, and neurological harm. Emissions from burning coal also include other heavy metals, which have been linked to developmental damage in humans and animals. We must also consider both fly ash and bottom ash, which are residues created when power plants burn coal. The situation is dire, with coal ash contaminating groundwater, surface waterways, and even the air we breathe. Both the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act require industries to reduce pollutants released into the air and water.

The beneficial use of coal ash holds immense promise for our state. By repurposing coal ash for various applications such as cement, bricks and even ceramics, we can achieve significant environmental, economic, and performance benefits. Notably, the recycling and reuse of coal ash can lead to reduced reliance on virgin resources, lower greenhouse gas emissions, decrease cost associated with coal ash disposal and improved strength and durability of materials.

One of the most compelling aspects of coal ash reuse is its role in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. For every ton of coal ash used in making cement, one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> is saved from being emitted into the atmosphere. This presents a tangible and impactful way to combat climate change while simultaneously addressing the coal ash disposal problem and permanently removing the threat of coal ash to our drinking water supplies.

It is concerning to note that the United States is currently importing coal ash for use in making cement, while tons of coal ash remain unused and potentially harmful when left in the ground. By enacting HB1193, Maryland can reverse this trend and unlock the full potential of coal ash within our state.

Moreover, the recycling and reuse of coal ash have the potential to create local jobs and stimulate economic growth. By investing in innovative technologies and infrastructure for coal ash reuse, Maryland can foster a burgeoning industry that generates employment opportunities and bolster our economy.

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In conclusion, HB1193 represents a win-win solution for Maryland. By promoting the recycling and reuse of coal ash, we can simultaneously address environmental challenges, reduce CO2 emission, create local jobs, and boot our economy. I passionately urge this committee to support HB1193 and seize the opportunity to harness the full potential of coal ash for the benefit of our state and future generations.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Sharon Lawrence

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