

Testimony Supporting SB146
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
January 25, 2024

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of District 12 in Baltimore City, a Maryland taxpayer, a resident concerned about climate change for the future of our children, and a faculty member at Johns Hopkins University who specializes in research and teaching about sustainability, I am writing to express my strong support of SB146, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act.

Trash incineration is a very polluting method of producing electricity. [A new 2023 study in PLOS Climate](#) found that “incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than *any* other power source” - including coal plants. [EPA's Emissions Inventory](#) indicates that in 2020, the three trash incinerators profiting from Maryland's RPS emitted 2.5 million tons of CO2 into the atmosphere. Incineration emits mercury and lead, which are not safe at any level of exposure.

Maryland is wasting an increasing amount of money subsidizing trash incineration. Over three years, due to the market-based nature of the subsidy (the amount of electricity produced by incinerators has not increased), the total subsidies to trash incinerators through Maryland's RPS ballooned from \$11.5 million in 2020 to \$24.7 million in 2022. This is an incredible windfall for the incinerators, and bad for Marylanders. We can't afford to keep wasting increasing amounts of money profiting something that's not putting renewable energy on the grid.

Maryland needs to take action on climate change. We need to be funding renewable energy development and taking the climate crisis seriously. The RPS is an important tool to support clean, renewable energy development and decrease emissions from the electricity sector, and it's important to ensure that our money is being invested wisely.

State government supports this bill. It's recommended in the [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#) that MDE just released at the end of December, and also recommended by the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's [2023 Annual Report](#).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole Labruto

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