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## **Testimony In Support of Reclaim Renewable Energy Act - SB146**

Position: Favorable

On behalf of the nonprofit Food & Water Watch and our 40,000 Maryland members, we are submitting this testimony in support of the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, Senate Bill 146. This bill would finally remove trash incineration from being counted as 'renewable energy' source that is eligible to receive ratepayer subsidies in the state.

The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) was set up as an important tool to help meet ambitious climate goals in Maryland. But the program has been undermined by its use as a waste management subsidy for trash incineration to the detriment of Maryland's residents and ratepayers.

While the RPS was established for the purpose of speeding our transition to renewable energy to both decrease greenhouse gas emissions and provide for a healthier environment, trash incineration does neither. In fact, [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."

We must fix this unreasonable and irresponsible section in our state's renewable energy policy because it is also costing ratepayer money that should be going, if anything, towards funding true renewables like wind or solar. The total subsidies to trash incinerators through Maryland's RPS ballooned from \$11.5 million in 2020 to \$24.7 million in 2022. That is on top of tens of millions of dollars that had already gone to trash incineration in the previous decade of the state's renewable energy program, all costs that ultimately get passed on to Maryland's ratepayers.

As Maryland continues to commit to enacting new policies to help address the climate crisis and promote the best clean energy policies, it is clear that subsidizing trash incineration as a 'renewable' is an antiquated policy that must be scrapped itself. We urge you to vote "yes" on the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, SB 146.