



Loyola University Maryland Environmental Action Club

President: *Gianna Sansonetti*

February 23rd, 2024

TO: Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

HEARING DATE: February 27th, 2024

BILL: SB 893

TITLE: Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators – Areas III and IV

POSITION: SUPPORT

Loyola University Maryland's student-led Environmental Action Club aims to create a community for our members to become more informed about environmental justice, particularly in Baltimore. After hearing about our neighbors from the York Road community's opposition over the last four years to a proposed crematorium at Vaughn Greene Funeral Home, we have become particularly concerned. Having heard their apprehensions, we stand in solidarity with the York Road Partnership and consider this an environmental justice issue that demands our attention.

We are particularly troubled by the fact that the majority-Black neighborhoods surrounding the proposed site of this crematorium already have documented elevated levels of asthma, COPD, and cardiac disease and worry that placing an incinerator here would also negatively impact the health and well-being of already marginalized communities. Seeing that this particular stretch of road already struggles with air pollution as a heavily traveled route (on the busiest bus route in Baltimore, no less) in an urban setting with numerous drive-throughs, we fear that this crematorium would do more harm than good for our community by adding a new source of harmful PM 2.5 air pollution and various toxic pollutants.

We appreciate that Senate Bill 893 aims to protect residential areas and facilities that care for vulnerable populations from air pollution by establishing this distance of 1,000 feet. Knowing that there are other communities in Maryland just like ours, we are proud to support this bill in hopes that they may never face the same threat.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 893.