



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

WDC Testimony on HB0091

**Fossil Fuel-Powered Lawn and Garden Care – State Purchase, Use, and Contracts – Prohibition
Committee: Health and Government Operations**

Hearing Date: January 23, 2024

Favorable

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club** (WDC) for the 2024 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of **HB0091** to guide the state to the use of exclusively zero-emission lawn and garden equipment. It provides for the gradual replacement of the state's fleet of fossil fuel-powered equipment with equivalent electric equipment, and requires contractors hired by the state to do likewise. This transition aligns with Maryland's [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#) and the [Climate Pathways Report](#) to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2031.

At this point there is overwhelming evidence of the alarming climate effects of burning fossil fuel generally. The equipment covered by this bill drives significant harm to both our environment and the general population, and its ubiquitous use means every individual is repeatedly exposed to the harmful toxins and noise. These toxins include [particulate matter](#), [nitrogen dioxide](#), [volatile organic compounds](#), and known carcinogens like [1,3-butadiene](#), [benzene](#), and [formaldehyde](#). The fact that all this pollution is premised on lawn and landscape care makes this bill all the more important.

The bill covers four categories of equipment: leaf blowers, lawn mowers, hedge trimmers and weed trimmers. It provides a sensible transition period before the prohibition of further purchases of this equipment takes effect. Importantly, it includes an exception in cases where equivalent electric equipment is not yet commercially available. The bill sensibly allows the ongoing use of existing state equipment that is fossil fuel-driven until the end of its useful life, or until January 1, 2030.

In addition to the phase-out of further state purchases, this bill would require state contractors and their subcontractors to transition from fossil fuel-powered equipment. As with state purchases, there is an exception when commercial equivalents are not yet available.

WDC is committed to supporting bills like this as part of our work to promote the well-being of women and their families, and by extension the protection of our climate and environment.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

Diana E. Conway
Chair, WDC Subcommittee on the Environment