



The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

House Bill 701

Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - Purchase, Use, and Sale - Prohibitions (Clean Air Quiet Communities Act)

Position: Information

Committee: Economic Matters

Date: February 11, 2025

From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is providing **INFORMATIONAL** testimony for HB 701.

Bill Summary

House Bill 701 would prohibit state agencies from purchasing any gasoline-powered leaf blowers beginning on July 1, 2025 and would require a phased prohibition on the use of such leaf blowers by state agencies and contractors or subcontractors employed by state agencies through December 31, 2029. A full prohibition on use by state agencies and their contractors and subcontractors applies as of January 1, 2030. Leaf blowers are defined in the bill as including any handheld, backpack, walk-behind leaf blowing devices powered by combustion engines, and electric leaf blowers connected to gasoline generators. The bill would also require that beginning on September 1, 2025, retailers notify purchasers or potential purchasers that gasoline-powered leaf blowers are not available for purchase or allowed to be purchased as of January 1, 2027.

Position Rationale

MDE appreciates the intent of this legislation, however HB 701 does not include an enforcement mechanism, leaving ambiguity as to how the gasoline-powered leaf blower prohibitions will be enforced.

If MDE is the assumed enforcing agency, HB 701 would require substantial time and resources to enforce the provisions in the law. MDE would be tasked with monitoring and overseeing every government entity that purchases and uses, or contracts for use of, gasoline-powered leaf blowers to ensure compliance with the prohibition. Additionally, HB 701 would also require MDE to begin monitoring retailers to ensure businesses are complying with the notice requirements in the law, which may be difficult to monitor, and once the sale of the equipment is prohibited, ensuring that companies are no longer selling the equipment in the State. If an entity was found guilty of violating the law, MDE would also be responsible for any enforcement actions.

Accordingly, MDE respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberation.

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