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Esteemed members of the Maryland General Assembly,

My name is Zack Buster, and I am writing on behalf of the community nonprofit initiative Environmental Justice Maryland to urgently encourage your support of the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2025. (SB-10/HB-220) Over 20 years ago, the legislature worked together to establish the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Program to incentivize the switch to renewable, clean energy and ensure a better, greener future.

However, additions were made to the portfolio that directly undermined the legislative intent of promoting **green and clean** renewable energy. One of these mistakes was adding waste incineration into the renewable portfolio standard in 2011. While incineration may be renewable, it is neither green nor clean and is therefore directly in opposition to the portfolio's goals.

Waste incineration's inclusion in the RPS not only goes against the intent of the law but is also in conflict with our overall goals as a state. The environment is a Top 10 priority in the 2024 Moore-Miller State Plan, which includes a commitment to "invest in **clean** energy." However, as long as waste incineration is included in the portfolio, the tax dollars of myself and every other Marylander are indirectly funding dirty energy and polluting the overburdened and underserved communities of South Baltimore. I am writing because I live near a coal power plant and experience the effects of environmental injustice every time I take a breath in my own backyard.

As we all know, Maryland is currently in a fiscal position where we need to use every dollar of the people's money for our strategic goals and make life better for every Marylander. In addition to aligning our investments with our values, the \$24 million in funding that subsidized these sources of harmful pollution would go to truly green and clean energy. This bill would allow for the funding we set aside for the program to go much further toward its goals.

In conclusion, this bill would stop our taxes from funding environmental injustices, make our investments more impactful, and reduce the fiscal strain on the state during this time of great budgetary concerns. It is time for Maryland to end this decade-long contradiction and remove waste incineration from the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Program. For these reasons, I respectfully request a **favorable** report on SB-10/HB-220.