



**Bill Title:** SB10 Reclaim Renewable Energy Act

**Position:** Favorable

**To:** Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**From:** Imani Harvill, Member of Progressive Maryland

**Date:** 2/11/25

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

I am writing to you at this time to address trash incineration as a standard practice for renewable energy and to express my support surrounding the introduction of the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act. As a lifelong resident of Maryland, growing up in District 46's South Baltimore Cherry Hill neighborhood, I have a deep love for Baltimore City and for the State of Maryland as a whole. So much so, that I returned to Cherry Hill with my family in 2017 to remain proud members of the Cherry Hill community and dedicated residents of Baltimore City. Despite this history, it was only last year that I was informed of the concerning environmental and health issues greatly impacting South Baltimore, as well as other communities throughout Maryland, made possible through the work of Progressive Maryland's Environmental Justice Task Force. Since then, I have been keeping myself engaged with helping to support efforts to significantly decrease air pollution through an increase in the State of Maryland's use of truly green renewable energy sources.

One of the most concerning bits of information I have learned about trash incineration is the fact that Maryland residents have been footing the bill for its practice for quite some time. Already Maryland residents have spent over 100 million dollars subsidizing waste to energy as a renewable energy source through utility bill payments. I am appalled just thinking about the amount of money I and my fellow residents have wasted paying for a renewable energy source that is not truly green and that has been touted as releasing toxic elements into the air that residents have been breathing in daily over the last few decades. To add to this, Maryland residents have recently experienced an egregious increase in their utility bills, making residents have to bear an even greater cost to fund waste incineration.

The State of Maryland also finds itself in a very precarious financial situation. Right now Maryland faces a 3 billion dollar deficit along with an alarming, ever decreasing population. It is imperative that the state proceeds with fiscal caution and responsibility in a way that does not overburden its already dwindling communities. That is why I am supporting SB10. Maryland and its residents deserve a fighting chance. Now is the time to do what is best for Maryland. Because of this, I am strongly urging the Senate to act now and support the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act.

Sincerely,  
Imani Harvill



## Sources

<https://marylandmatters.org/2024/10/21/ferguson-seeks-to-remove-incinerators-from-states-renewable-energy-subsidy-program/>

### Terminating Financing of Dirty Energy: Reclaim Renewable Energy Act (RREA) of 2025

SB10/HB220  
Bill Sponsors: Sen. Bill Ferguson, Del. Vaughn Stewart

- Maryland's **Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)** includes "waste-to-energy" (i.e. **trash incineration**) as a renewable energy source that can be tax subsidized.
- Trash incineration releases greenhouse gases, toxic elements (e.g., mercury[1] and lead[2]), and toxic ash into the air—**this is not clean energy!**
- In 2020, the BRESKO incinerator in Baltimore emitted **690,033 tons of carbon dioxide** alone[3]
- Adverse health outcomes associated with exposure to burnt trash:
  - Cancer,**
  - Brain Damage,**
  - Respiratory conditions** (e.g., asthma, lung deterioration),
  - Cardiovascular issues** (e.g., heart attacks, heart disease).[4]

**The RREA will:**

- Remove** trash incineration from the list of green energy sources eligible for tax subsidies
- Redistribute** this subsidy toward investment in clean, renewable energy sources (i.e. solar, wind, and geothermal)
- Advance** Maryland Department of Environment (MDE)'s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan aiming to "reduce statewide GHG emissions 60% from 2006 levels by 2031."[6]

**The RREA will NOT:**

- Shut down the incinerators** in Maryland, rather it will no longer subsidize waste incineration as a renewable energy source
- Affect the state budget** in any capacity. Instead it will redirect subsidies toward clean, renewable energy sources.

**Total Subsidy by Facility**  
All figures are from the year 2023

Facility	Subsidy (in \$)
Covanta Fairfax Energy	\$8,075,895.87
Montgomery County Resource Recovery	\$6,945,755.84
Montgomery County Resource Recovery	\$296,965.74
Wheelabrator Baltimore Refuse (Generation 1)	\$8,986,091.21

*"I want our state to...[fund] clean energy and not...trash incineration because the emissions are harming my health, the health of my friends, and the environment."* - Baltimore Constituent

- It cost Maryland taxpayers over \$24 million to subsidize trash incineration facilities in 2023, with nearly **\$9 million** directed toward the Wheelabrator Baltimore Refuse Energy Systems Company ("BRESKO") Incinerator in Baltimore, Maryland[3]
- If trash incineration **remains in the RPS**, between 2023 and 2030, Maryland energy providers will waste an **additional \$200,000,000** to buy Renewable Energy Credits from trash incinerators.[3]
- Waste incineration is always more expensive** when compared to deriving energy from clean, renewable energy sources, and many trash incinerators have shut down for this reason.[5]

**Get Involved:**

If you want to support this legislation, submit testimony, or want to learn more about the RREA, please reach out to Progressive Maryland's Environmental Justice Organizer, SirJames Weaver.

✉ sirjames@progressivemaryland.org  
☎ 240-883-7645

**Sources**

[1] "Mercury exposure and children's health" (Bose-O'Reilly S, McCarty KM, Steckling N, Lettmaler B, 2010)


[2] "Lead in Food and Foodwares" (FDA, 2025)

[3] PEER Report (PEER, 2024)

[4] "Waste Incineration: Deeply Harmful and Outdated" (Equity Fund, 2022)

[5] "Facilities: Trash Incineration Closures 2009-2024" (Energy Justice, 2024)

[6] "Climate Pollution Reduction Plan" (Maryland Department of the Environment, 2023)



<https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/local-news/moving-out-of-maryland-census-da-ta-76ZWGRSMXNCKTGR62I4FONWZBA/>