Bioenergy Devco - 2025 - SB 480 - Clean Energy Pro

Uploaded by: Aaron Greenfield

Position: FAV

To: **The Honorable Brian Feldman**
Education, Energy and Environment Committee

From: **Bioenergy Devco**

Subject: **Senate Bill 480, Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment**

Date: **February 20, 2025**

Position: **Favorable**

Bioenergy Devco supports Senate Bill 480, Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment.

This testimony is offered on behalf of Bioenergy Devco, an international leader in anaerobic digestion solutions with over 24 years of experience. BDC's exceptional team of engineers, microbial experts, biologists, chemists, agronomists, construction designers and facility managers are dedicated to delivering an environmentally sound solution that creates a true source of renewable, carbon-negative energy as well as a high nutrient soil amendment.

The Clean Energy Procurement Program established by Senate Bill 480 will enable the state to procure biogas, a clean and renewable energy source, for use in the transportation and building sectors. By promoting the use of biogas, this program will help reduce Maryland's reliance on fossil fuels, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and support the state's climate commitments. Senate Bill 480 requires the Department of General Services to consult with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center in establishing the program. This collaborative approach will ensure that the program is well-designed, effective, and aligned with the state's broader sustainability goals. Furthermore, we appreciate the bill's emphasis on evaluating the environmental and economic benefits and costs of replacing fossil natural gas with biogas. This analysis will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the program and inform future policy decisions.

Biogas is a vital component of a comprehensive clean energy strategy. Biogas is a renewable energy source produced from organic waste materials, offering numerous environmental, economic, and energy-related benefits. From an environmental perspective, biogas production reduces greenhouse gas emissions by capturing and utilizing methane from decomposing waste. This process also contributes to waste management by diverting organic waste from landfills and minimizing pollution.

Furthermore, the byproduct of biogas production, known as digestate, serves as a nutrient-rich soil amendment, improving soil and plant health while decreasing the need for chemical fertilizers.

In addition to its environmental benefits, biogas production has significant economic advantages. It creates jobs in the renewable energy sector and provides farmers and businesses with an additional income stream by converting waste into energy. Biogas also supports decentralized energy production, enabling local communities to generate their own energy and reducing reliance on non-renewable sources.

The establishment of a Clean Energy Procurement Program, as outlined in Senate Bill 480, will play a crucial role in promoting the use of biogas in Maryland. By authorizing the Department of General Services to enter into contracts to procure biogas, this bill will help stimulate the development of a robust biogas industry in our state. We are particularly pleased that the bill requires the Department to consider the social cost of greenhouse gases and the state's climate commitments when issuing solicitations for biogas contracts.

We also appreciate the bill's emphasis on data collection and analysis, which will help evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify opportunities for expansion. The requirement for the University System of Maryland to complete a carbon lifecycle analysis of biogas will provide valuable insights into the environmental and economic benefits of biogas production.

The establishment of a Clean Energy Procurement Program will be a significant step forward in promoting the use of biogas in Maryland, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting a more sustainable energy future.

For these reasons, Bioenergy Devco requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 480.

Please contact Aaron J. Greenfield at 410.446.1992, if you have any questions.

SB480_WGL_Todd_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Brandon Todd
Position: FAV

1000 Maine Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20024 www.washingtongas.com

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT and BUDGET AND TAXATION

TESTIMONY ON: SB480 DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment

POSITION: SUPPORT

HEARING DATE: February 20, 2025

Washington Gas respectfully submits this statement in **SUPPORT** of **Senate Bill 480 — Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment**

Statement of Support:

In support of renewable energy supplies produced in the state of Maryland and as a means of reducing the cost impact of the rising cost of energy generation, Washington Gas supports the establishment of a pilot program for the procurement – on competitive and cost-effect terms – of locally produced biogas as an alternative to imported natural gas.

Background

The Company supports Maryland's climate goals and believes that Maryland's gas infrastructure can customers. The Company appreciates the opportunity to inform Senate Bill 480 ("SB 480"), which concerns the development of a biogas pilot program within the Department of General Services. The Company is encouraged to see a proposal for the State to formally examine the various economic and environmental benefits of biogas for reducing greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions, particularly in the State's buildings and transportation sectors. Hundreds of biogas interconnect projects have been implemented across the U.S. to-date and gas utilities have played, and can continue to play, an important role in facilitating these projects to help realize these benefits. Supportive public policies and incentives are needed to take advantage of biogas's potential for reducing emissions. In the example of landfills, owner/operators can either flare the biogas, use it as a renewable energy resource directly, or upgrade the landfill gas to pipeline quality to be used in existing natural gas infrastructure. Converting landfill gas to biogas takes what would otherwise be a waste product and creates energy that is used for a productive purpose.

Biogas is a fully interchangeable lower-carbon alternative to conventional natural gas. According to the Department of Energy, biogas is a pipeline-quality gas that is fully interchangeable with conventional natural gas. Biogas is the gaseous product of the decomposition of organic matter that has been upgraded to pipeline quality standards.[1] Capturing, treating, and upgrading biogas from sources of organic matter, including landfills, wastewater treatment facilities, organic food waste, and agricultural operations, to pipeline-quality gas can significantly reduce GHG emissions from the State's waste and agriculture sectors.[2] The waste sector accounts for a significant portion of the State's GHG emissions; landfills and wastewater treatment plants accounted for approximately 7 million metric tonnes of CO2e, or approximately 8% of the State's gross GHG emissions, as of 2020.[3] The Maryland Department of the Environment ("MDE") recently found that landfills were the single largest source of methane emissions in Maryland, and that these emissions have been historically underestimated and are approximately four times higher than previously thought.[4] MDE recently published a final regulation for control of landfill gas emissions from municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills in 2023[5] establishing support for specific, predictable, and achievable reduction in GHG targets for waste products which can unlock private/public investment and preserve customer energy affordability for alternate fuels. The agriculture sector accounted for 4% of the State's GHG emissions in 2020, and MDE projects these emissions to be relatively constant through 2050 with few abatement options identified. [6]

Supporting utility investment in biogas projects can help environmental justice areas. According to the Rocky Mountain Institute, "many landfills and incinerators directly impact disadvantaged communities and an analysis utilizing EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen) found that 54 percent of landfills reporting to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program have communities within one mile of the landfill that exceed the national average for either people of color or those with low incomes."[7] Procuring biogas and building biogas projects in Maryland can achieve GHG emission reductions, divert negative impacts from disadvantaged communities, and support the development of lower-carbon fuels for a variety of end uses.

Biogas can support energy security and energy system resiliency. Maryland procures the vast majority of its natural gas from out-of-state sources. Biogas can provide an additional source of local supply, potentially creating resiliency benefits in the case of system disruption.

Biogas can be used as a lower-carbon transportation fuel. Natural gas vehicle fuel can help to reduce GHG **emissions** by —27% relative to diesel and using biogas can help fleets reach negative GHG emission levels.[8] Using biogas can provide a cost-effective solution to decarbonizing heavy transport. For heavy-duty vehicles, natural gas vehicles fueling with biogas can be a more cost-effective option than battery-electric technology at reducing GHG emissions.

Biogas can create significant economic opportunities for the State. Capturing otherwise lost methane can provide an additional source of revenue to municipal facilities, including landfills and

[1] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center
[2] EPA. Renewable Natural Gas (Aug. 3, 2023).
[3] MDE. 2020 Greenhouse Gas Inventory (Sep. 24, 2022). In the 'Summary' tab, emissions from "Landfills" and "Wastewater Management" add to 7.21748 million metric tonnes of CO2e, which corresponds to 8.4856% of Gross Emissions, which was 85.05523 million metric tonnes of CO2e. All numbers use a 20-year GWP.
[4] MDE. Climate Pollution Reduction Plan (Dec. 28, 2023). Page 52
[5] Maryland Code. Section 26.11.42.04 - Requirements for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Landfills (Feb. 9, 2024).
[6] MDE. Climate Pollution Reduction Plan (Dec. 28, 2023). Pages 58-59
[7] Rocky Mountain Institute. Priority Climate Action Plan Guide: Organic Waste & Landfill Methane Strategies (2022).
[8] Cummins. Natural Gas Engines vs Diesel Engines (May 4, 2022)

wastewater treatment, as well as agricultural operations. It can also create useful co- and byproducts, such as high-quality fertilizers.[9]

The Bill includes specific cost-containment features for the state's budget and compliance with the State's climate goals. Biogas will be procured through sealed competitive bids and will be purchased only if "competitively priced." The pilot will run only through December 2029 and the Department will report on the economic and environmental costs and benefits to the state. The University of Maryland will also perform a carbon lifecycle analysis to ensure consistency with the State's climate goals.

Biogas can be produced in-state. Much of Maryland's energy needs must be imported from other states or countries but significant quantities of biogas can be produced locally. SB480 provides that the pilot will preferentially award the pilot contract to biogas produced in-state.

Conclusion

At Washington Gas, our core values are safety, collaboration, integrity, inclusion, and learning. The Company is committed to working with stakeholders to help achieve Maryland's GHG emissions reduction targets. Biogas can be used to help reduce GHG emissions from current uses for natural gas while it remains an important part of the State's energy system. Natural gas is currently used to provide energy to the residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation sectors and most analyses today indicate this will continue to be the case for decades to come.

SB 480 promotes the role for existing and future technology innovation to support diverse pathways to decarbonizing Maryland, and the State's existing natural gas infrastructure can and should be leveraged to preserve affordability, reliability, safety, and security of energy delivery. Washington Gas is an innovative company and is supportive of leveraging its unique talent and expertise to provide alternative energy sources and believes the deployment of this technology has the potential to offer several benefits to its Maryland customers. Allowing utilities to own biogas assets and purchase biogas for utility customers would exponentially unlock the potential for lower carbon fuels especially for carbon intense industries.

Washington Gas Light Company

Washington Gas Light Company ("the Company") provides safe, reliable natural gas service to more than 1.2 million customers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Washington Gas has been providing energy to residential, commercial, government, and industrial customers for more than 175 years, and currently serves more than 500,000 Maryland customers in Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles, St. Mary's, Frederick, and Calvert Counties. The Company employs over 400 people within Maryland, including contractors, plumbers, union workers, and other skilled tradespeople. We strive to improve the quality of life in our communities by

[9] CleanBay Renewables. Home (2023). CleanBay's poultry litter RNG facilities can create tons of **natural, controlled-release fertilizer** with humic acid for farmers in our watershed to better **meet the region's agricultural needs** and **reduce phosphorous runoff**

maintaining a diverse workforce, working with suppliers that represent and reflect the communities we serve, and giving back through our charitable contributions and employee volunteer activities. The Company, together with other natural gas distribution utilities, are responsible for delivering the primary source of heat to Maryland residential energy consumers, serving approximately one half of all Maryland households while providing critical energy services to residential, commercial, and industrial customers at one-third the cost of electricity on a per unit basis.'

Washington Gas looks forward to working with the Committee on this legislation, and other policies that support the advancement of renewable natural gas. For the above reasons Washington Gas respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 480.

Contact:
Brandon Todd, Vice President, Government Affairs, Policy & Advocacy, Washington Gas
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MD 2025 SB 480 Columbia Gas Testimony Final.pdf
Uploaded by: Carville Collins
Position: FAV

FAVORABLE – Senate Bill 480
Establishing a Clean Energy Procurement Program in the Department of General Services
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc., a natural gas utility providing energy to more than 34,000 customers in Maryland's western counties of Allegany, Garrett and Washington, supports Senate Bill 480. Columbia supports public policies promoting an environment of innovation, research, development and deployment needed for greenhouse gas emissions reductions in Maryland that maintain customer affordability and system reliability.

The legislation requires the Maryland Department of General Services, in consultation with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Clean Energy Center to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program in the Department. The purpose of the program is to procure biogas for use as a fuel in Maryland's transportation and building sectors and to evaluate the environmental and economic benefits and costs of replacing fossil natural gas with biogas, on a short-term and long-term basis, in furtherance of the state's net-zero statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Biogas is a reliable waste-derived fuel that can be used to power homes, businesses and even vehicles. It is made by capturing and refining gases released from decomposing organic waste material. Every community in Maryland produces waste. As that waste breaks down, it emits methane, which is a naturally occurring greenhouse gas. Biogas projects capture this methane from existing food waste, animal manure, wastewater sludge and garbage, and redirect it away from the environment, repurposing it as an ultra-low to zero-carbon renewable energy source.

Because biogas uses methane emissions that would otherwise be emitted into the atmosphere, it is considered a carbon-neutral fuel. Biogas is ready to use in existing natural gas infrastructure and can be injected into pipelines to immediately begin reducing natural gas carbon content. In a recent study by ICF, a global consulting and technology services company, Maryland has the potential feedstock to produce enough biogas to replace 1/3 of the natural gas used in the state. Use of biogas can make meaningful progress towards decarbonization, especially in hard-to-decarbonize sectors such as heavy-duty transportation or industrial facilities that require high-temperature heat for industrial processes. Such industries could use biogas to reduce their carbon footprint. Further, biogas can be used in existing natural gas equipment, allowing decarbonization without the need to replace or retrofit systems. Studies have shown that biogas can be a lower cost way to decarbonize heating systems.

Columbia Gas of Maryland believes the requirements of Senate Bill 480 are appropriately and reasonably crafted policies related to the creation of a Clean Energy Procurement Program. Studying biogas to determine if it can be a cost-effective and reasonably priced addition to Maryland's energy mix, creating an even larger "all of the above approach" to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet Maryland's ambitious climate goals, is an idea worth examining. Columbia supports the legislation.

February 20, 2025

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BGE_FAV_EEE_Senate Bill 480 - Department of Genera
Uploaded by: Dytonia Reed
Position: FAV

Position Statement

Support
Education, Energy, and the Environment
2/20/2025

Senate Bill 480 - Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) supports *Senate Bill 480*. *Senate Bill 480* mandates the Department of General Services (DGS), in collaboration with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center, to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program by January 1, 2026.

This program requires DGS to issue a solicitation for procuring biogas to meet the State's transportation and building needs. Biogas, derived from resources such as farm manure and food waste, is essential for diversifying our energy sources, ensuring reliability, and reducing our carbon footprint. It can be used for electricity production, heating and cooling, industrial applications, and transportation, while also capturing methane that would otherwise contribute to Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions.

BGE is the first utility in Maryland to interconnect a biogas plant, owned and operated by Bioenergy Devco, to its gas distribution system. This plant, located on the Maryland Food Center Authority Campus in Jessup, became operational in 2022 and has demonstrated the environmental and economic benefits of biogas.

BGE acknowledges the potential of biogas to meet the State's growing energy demands and ambitious climate goals and fully supports *Senate Bill 480.* We respectfully request a favorable Committee report on *Senate Bill 480*.

Charles Washington| Brittany Jones | Guy Andes| Dytonia Reed| 410.269.5281

SB 480 - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establ

Uploaded by: Grayson Middleton

Position: FAV

Educate. Advocate. Innovate.

Date: February 18, 2025
To: Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
From: Grayson Middleton, Government Affairs Manager
Re: SB 480 - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment

Delmarva Chicken Association (DCA) is the trade association representing the meat-chicken growers, processing companies, and allied business members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Delaware. We support SB 480 and urge a favorable committee report.

SB 480 would establish the Clean Energy Procurement Program within the Department of General Services, which would investigate the costs and benefits of biogas and allow for a pilot procurement program for this clean-burning renewable energy source.

The chicken community has been a leader in sustainability among agricultural enterprises for over three decades. We were among the first group in the region to widely adopt solar energy and were among the first to seriously study and implement ways in which our waste and byproducts could be minimized and reused. Chicken litter, which was once a nuisance for poultry farmers, is now a widely sought-after and easily profitable fertilizer. Perdue Farms was a pioneer when they developed one of the first manure-pelletizing plants in the country, whereby chicken litter was processed into dry pellets for use as fertilizer by farmers and home gardeners. This product was shipped around the country and diverted tons of chicken litter from the region. Unfortunately, it never turned a profit, and that Seaford, Delaware facility is once again serving as ground zero in the region for a new and exciting technology that will once again (albeit more efficiently) turn waste into a valuable product through anaerobic digestion. This technology also has major potential for the Maryland chicken community.

We at DCA fully support the use of anaerobic as just one of many possible tools for food and animal waste, particularly from poultry processing plants. This technology has been proven as an energy-efficient process whereby waste is converted into clean-burning natural gas and nutritious soil amendments. This is also a green technology. Anaerobic digestion diverts waste from treatment plants and landfills and reduces the need to obtain natural gas from other sources, such as fracking.

For more than 20 years, anaerobic digestion has been successfully implemented throughout the European Union and receives substantial incentives both from the EU and its constituent nations as a renewable energy source. As of 2016, there were approximately 17,500 anaerobic digestion plants throughout the EU, with most of them in Germany. These countries have seen significant decreases in food and animal waste going to landfills and treatment plants, and the product is widely regarded as a green and even preferable alternative to commercial fertilizer.

Anaerobic digestion is still in its infancy in the United States, and only a handful exist in Maryland. However, its future as an environmentally friendly bi-product management and carbon reduction tool is promising. To encourage the widespread adoption and proliferation of this green energy source, Maryland has the opportunity to study its benefits and make these findings public. Furthermore, by

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starting the pilot procurement program, the State will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also set an example for private industry, further encouraging the adoption of this technology.

We urge a **favorable** vote on SB 480.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at Grayson Middleton at middleton@dcahicken.com or 410-490-3329.

Sincerely,

Grayson Middleton

SB 480_MDCC_Department of General Services - Clean
Uploaded by: Hannah Allen
Position: FAV

MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

Senate Bill 480

Date: February 20, 2025
Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Support

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Senate Bill 480 (SB 480) establishes a Clean Energy Procurement Program within the Maryland Department of General Services. This legislation takes a pragmatic approach to advancing Maryland's energy goals by evaluating the role of biogas as a traditional and complementary energy source for the state's transportation and building sectors.

As Maryland works towards its ambitious climate goals, maintaining energy reliability and affordability remains paramount for the business community. SB 480 facilitates a data-driven approach to assessing biogas' potential, ensuring that environmental and economic considerations are carefully weighed. By leveraging existing waste streams, biogas presents an opportunity to reduce methane emissions while integrating seamlessly into current energy infrastructure, minimizing costly disruptions.

A diversified energy strategy is critical for businesses that rely on stable and cost-effective energy solutions. Biogas offers a practical, near-term option that supports industry needs while reducing overall carbon emissions. Furthermore, the bill's emphasis on competitive procurement ensures fiscal responsibility and market-driven outcomes.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests a **favorable report** on **SB 480**.

25 SB480 Biogas.pdf
Uploaded by: Lindsay Thompson
Position: FAV

Denali
WATER SOLUTIONS

February 20, 2025

Senate Bill 480 - Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment

Committees: Education, Energy and Environment & Budget and Taxation

Position: Support

Denali Water Solutions is an innovative waste disposal and recycling company that is committed to repurposing waste to create value and make our economy more circular. Denali has been at the forefront of diverting and converting organic waste streams for more than 25 years. Denali is committed to the founding purpose: to replenish the earth by repurposing waste. Denali understands the importance of reducing our environmental footprint, and we take care to ensure that our processes are as efficient and sustainable as possible. Denali is constantly innovating and exploring new ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials.

Senate Bill 480 would require the Department of General Services, in consultation with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center, to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program in the Department and issue a solicitation for a biogas procurement contract.

Biogas is "gaseous fuel, especially methane, produced by the fermentation of organic matter," often referred to as renewable natural gas. This renewable energy source can be produced via anerobic digestion of organic materials such as food processing residuals, food waste and de-packed food products.

Denali provides services across Maryland for hauling and recycling food processing residuals and food waste. Denali is also introducing depacking technologies that can remove packaging from most foods whether they are fresh, frozen or in liquid form. This allows the recycling or food waste from grocery stores that would otherwise be landfilled.

All of these organic materials serve as a feedstock for biogas production via anaerobic digestion and other methods. Creating a market for this renewable natural gas would increase the opportunities for recycling of these materials.

Contact:

Lindsay Thompson – lindsay@providence.llc

PHI SB 480 - DGS - Clean Energy Procurement Progra

Uploaded by: Poetri Deal

Position: FAV

February 20, 2025

112 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Support – Senate Bill 480 – Department of General Services – Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) and Delmarva Power & Light Company (Delmarva Power) support **Senate Bill 480 – Department of General Services – Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment**. This bill requires the Department of General Services (Department), in consultation with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center, to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program in the Department on or before January 1, 2026. The program's purpose is to procure biogas for use as a fuel in the state's transportation and building sectors to evaluate environmental and economic benefits and cost of replacing natural gas with biogas on a short-term and long-term basis. The bill authorizes the Department to enter into a contract to procure biogas.

While the state continues to pursue its clean energy goals, it is also facing significant resource adequacy concerns, due, in part, to the retirement of dispatchable generation facilities without sufficient dispatchable energy replacement, as well as growing energy demand. Innovative and thoughtful approaches must be considered as the state works to identify viable solutions to address its resource adequacy needs. This bill presents an opportunity to evaluate the viability of biogas as an alternative fuel source to natural gas and its potential to provide critical continued in-state energy generation, while prioritizing the state's net-zero greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Through the procurement of biogas, the bill directs the Department to evaluate the environmental and economic benefits of utilizing biogas as a replacement of natural gas in the state's transportation and building sectors. Pepco and Delmarva Power believe this is a responsible approach to help address the varied energy needs of the state in a manner that considers both the immediate and long-term needs, as well as maintaining the useful life of an asset. Maintaining resource adequacy is fundamental to maintaining a reliable and resilient energy grid, protecting public safety, and supporting continued economic growth. Pepco and Delmarva Power support the advancement of viable solutions that provide reliable energy supply, address affordability, and advance jurisdictional climate goals.

For these reasons, Pepco and Delmarva Power respectfully request a favorable report for this bill.

Valencia McClure | Anne Klase | Allyson Black-Woodson | Poetri Deal | 410 980 5347

MCIES SUPPORT SB 480 Biogas Feb 18 2025.pdf
Uploaded by: Sarah Peters
Position: FAV

Bill: SB 480/HB 1417- Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Energy Solutions, Inc. (MCIES), a coalition of diverse stakeholders, including representatives from organized labor, manufacturing, energy production, transportation, and public utilities, offers our support for SB 480/HB 1417.

The purpose of the program is to procure biogas for use as a fuel in Maryland's transportation and building sectors and to evaluate the environmental and economic benefits and costs of replacing fossil natural gas with biogas, on a short-term and long-term basis, in furtherance of the state's net-zero statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Biogas presents an innovative and immediate opportunity by leveraging existing waste streams to create a sustainable energy source. In this way, methane emissions from food waste, animal manure, wastewater sludge, and other organic materials are repurposed into a renewable, ultra-low to zero-carbon energy sources.

As Maryland continues its transition to a cleaner energy future, the use of biogas can play a pivotal role in decarbonizing hard-to-electrify sectors such as heavy-duty transportation and industrial facilities that require high-temperature heat. The ability of biogas to integrate into existing natural gas infrastructure makes it an efficient and cost-effective tool for reducing overall emissions.

We commend the bill's sponsors for introducing this forward-thinking legislation and urge the General Assembly to vote favorable on SB 480/HB 1417.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your support.

Sincerely,

Sarah Peters
Executive Director

SB 480_Chesapeake Utilities_Fav (02-20-25) (Final)
Uploaded by: Steve Baccino
Position: FAV

February 20, 2025

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
SB 480 – Department of General Services – Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment

Statement in Support

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation ("Chesapeake Utilities") **SUPPORTS** the provisions contained in SB 480, which seeks to require the Maryland Department of General Services ("Department"), in consultation with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Clean Energy Center, to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program for the purchase of biogas.

Chesapeake Utilities operates natural gas local distribution companies that serve approximately 32,000 customers on Maryland's Eastern Shore in Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. These public utilities are regulated by the Maryland Public Service Commission and have provided in the coldest months of the year safe, reliable, resilient, and affordable service in the state for decades. As a company, Chesapeake Utilities serves as a positive and informed resource in the ongoing energy and climate change discussions and a driver of economic development and increased employment opportunities. Moreover, Chesapeake Utilities is committed to continuing being part of the solution as Maryland addresses greenhouse gas emissions.

SB 480 Can Help the State Achieve its Climate Goals. SB 480 can help the State achieve its net-zero statewide greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions reduction goals by creating a biogas program program that will evaluate the economic benefits and costs of procuring biogas to offset traditional natural gas. Biogas is an energy solution that is clean, reliable, and environmentally friendly. Biogas is a fossil-free natural gas that is produced from the anaerobic digestion of naturally occurring sources such as food waste, manure, and other animal/plant-base materials to create biogas. The biogas is then upgraded and cleaned to a pipeline-quality gas that is fully interchangeable with traditional natural gas and can be injected into a public utility's gas distribution system. Biogas can also be used as a transportation fuel to replace diesel or gas for vehicles. Because biogas captures methane emissions from waste streams that break down and emit methane, which is a naturally occuring GHG, biogas is considered a carbon neutral fuel and can be used to offset GHG emissions.

Biogas is A Proven Renewable Fuel Technology. To effectively address the State's environmental challenges, while driving continuing economic development and increased employment opportunities, Maryland needs to use a diverse portfolio of energy solutions and resources that can work together now and affect measurable change quickly. Biogas reduces the impacts of organic wastes, while also fueling a clean, reliable renewable energy future.

Currently there are 885 biogas facilities across the Nation that are either operational, under construction or planned.[1]

Additionally, numerous states in the nation, including Virginia, have passed biogas related laws to produce and utilize biogas in their gas distribution system.

Chesapeake Utilities Owns Planet Found. Chesapeake Utilities owns Planet Found Energy Development ("Planet Found"), a Maryland-based facility formed by scientists, farmers and businesspeople in cooperation with the University of MD Eastern Shore and University of MD College Park. Planet Found is partially funded through grants from the Maryland Energy Administration. Located in Worcester County and in operation since 2017, Planet Found operates a farm-scale anaerobic digestion and nutrient capture system that produces a nutrient-rich soil conditioner, sold under the brand Element Soil, and biogas. Planet Found spent years researching and developing a technology surrounding the anaerobic digestion of poultry litter. This is the first Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) facility in the United States utilizing biogas from the anaerobic digestion of poultry litter. This success supports the expansion of the technology across the country, improving the sustainability of the natural gas and poultry industries.

On behalf of Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, and our thousands of employees and their families who contribute every day in the communities where they live, work and serve, we respectfully request an favorable vote on SB 480.

Sincerely,

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation
Steve Baccino, Governmental Affairs Director
Contact: sbaccino@chpk.com

[1] Renewable Natural Gas Projects & Policy | RNG Coalition

MDFB - Support - SB480 Department of General Servi
Uploaded by: Tyler Hough
Position: FAV

Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035
410-922-3426 | www.mdfarmbureau.com

February 18, 2025

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

RE: **Support of SB480 Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment**

On behalf of the nearly 8,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I submit written testimony in support of SB480 Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program – Establishment. This bill seeks to establish the Clean Energy Procurement Program within the Department of General Services.

This initiative will not only advance Maryland's clean energy goals but also provide significant benefits to the agricultural sector through the increased use of biogas. By prioritizing biogas procurement, the program will create new opportunities for farmers to utilize organic waste through anaerobic digestion, reducing greenhouse gas emissions while generating a reliable, renewable energy source. Anaerobic digestion technology allows agricultural operations to convert manure and other organic byproducts into biogas, addressing waste management challenges, improving soil health, and enhancing water quality by reducing nutrient runoff. Additionally, by integrating biogas into the state's energy portfolio, Maryland can decrease its reliance on fossil fuels, support rural economies, and promote sustainable farming practices. I urge the General Assembly to pass this bill, as it represents a critical step toward a cleaner environment, a stronger agricultural economy, and a more resilient energy future for Maryland.

Maryland Farm Bureau Supports SB480

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations
Please reach out to Tyler Hough, though@marylandfb.org, with any questions

MD_SB480_clean_energy.pdf
Uploaded by: Allie Wainer
Position: UNF

February 18, 2025

Re: Senate Bill 480

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Johns Hopkins University.

Maryland General Assembly
Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21411

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy & the Environment Committee:

We are researchers at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) based at the Bloomberg School of Public Health in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering. Our work involves investigating the interconnections among diet, food production, public health, and the environment. In our work, we have explored the public health implications of generating biogas using anaerobic digesters and animal manure.

SB480 calls for the Department of General Services to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program with the goal of replacing natural gas used for transportation and buildings with biogas purchases from within and outside of the state of Maryland. We agree that Maryland should reduce reliance on energy that contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and pursue alternative energy sources in line with its net-zero commitment. However, **we are opposed to SB480 for the reasons detailed below**.

Using biogas for energy generation can contribute to air pollution. Biogas is not a source of clean energy and should not be considered a climate solution. Biogas is made up of several gases including methane which, when burned, can introduce new sources of air pollution. Anaerobic manure digesters are increasingly being built on farms to extract biogas from animal manure and reduce methane emissions. Releases from these manure digesters could exacerbate chronic exposures among rural populations and may additionally pose acute hazards to workers and fenceline communities. As such, we are concerned about negative implications for public health and environmental justice if the State were to procure manure biogas from industrial animal agriculture operations as part of the proposed Clean Energy Procurement Program.

Manure biodigesters depend on inputs from high-density industrial farms, which are linked to many environmental injustices and public health concerns. Beyond the potential for production of manure biogas to contribute to air pollution, we are also concerned that including manure biogas in this program further perpetuates the industrial food animal production model. It is well documented that this model of animal production harms public health and the environment, disproportionately in low-income communities and communities of color. A better long-term strategy for the state would be to invest in wind and solar infrastructure—sources of clean and sustainable energy. If helpful, we are happy to provide more detailed information and scientific literature supporting these points.

Sincerely,

Allie Wainer, MS
Program Officer | Center for a Livable Future
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Patti Truant Anderson, PhD, MPH
Senior Program Officer | Center for a Livable Future
Faculty Associate | Health Policy and Management
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Keeve Nachman, PhD, MHS
Robert S. Lawrence Associate Professor and Associate Chair of Environmental Health and Engineering
Associate Director | Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Co-Director | Johns Hopkins Risk Sciences and Public Policy Institute
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

SB480_USM_UNF.pdf
Uploaded by: Andy Clark
Position: UNF

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Senate Bill 480
Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment
February 20, 2025
Unfavorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing the University System of Maryland (USM) to provide testimony on Senate Bill 480. The bill requires the Department of General Services (DGS), in consultation with the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee, the University System of Maryland (USM), and the Maryland Clean Energy Center, to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program in DGS on or before January 1, 2026.

The USM is comprised of twelve distinguished institutions, and three regional centers. We award eight out of every ten bachelor's degrees in the State. Each of USM's 12 institutions has a distinct and unique approach to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from western Maryland to the Eastern Shore, with the flagship campus in the Washington suburbs. The USM includes three Historically Black Institutions, comprehensive institutions and research universities, and the country's largest public online institution.

This bill would require the USM to complete a life-cycle analysis of Biogas. The USM does not have personnel in the System Office with the knowledge or expertise to conduct such an analysis. Moreover, lifecycle analysis of biogas costs considers all the financial expenses associated with producing biogas throughout its entire life cycle – from the initial feedstock collection and processing to the final energy production. Senate Bill 480 says nothing regarding the costs for construction, operation, maintenance, feedstock acquisition, and potential end-of-life disposal, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of the overall economic viability of a biogas project.

Should this bill pass, it is assumed that USM would need to conduct a procurement to hire a subject matter expert to conduct the analysis required by the bill. It is difficult to determine what the resulting contract for these services would cost but it is estimated to be in excess of $200,000.

The USM knows you're well aware of the current budget climate as we all are. The recently proposed deductions to our budget of 5% equate to $111 million. This is in addition to last year's cut and another mid-year cut to the FY25 budget which leaves the USM down over $180 million cumulatively in FY25 and FY26. The imposition of additional policy changes at this time would be more than challenging for all of our campuses on top of these reductions.

Contact: Susan Lawrence, Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, slawrence@usmd.edu

NGOLtr-OpposeSB480_2.20.25.pdf.pdf
Uploaded by: Chloe Waterman
Position: UNF

February 20, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Environment, Energy and Education Committee,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to oppose SB 480. Although we support the General Assembly's effort to mitigate the impacts of climate change by investing in clean, renewable energy sources, as currently written, SB 480 does not establish any parameters on the type of biogas that may be procured through the pilot program. As a result, we are concerned that Maryland tax dollars may be spent on purchasing manure biogas—also known as factory farm gas—through this legislation.

Factory farm gas is not clean or renewable energy. It is a greenwashing measure that insufficiently reduces methane emissions[1] while upholding the unsustainable and unjust systems of industrial animal agriculture and fossil fuel energy.

[1] Imperial College London. (2022, June 17). *Biogas and Biomethane Supply Chains Leak Twice as Much Methane as First Thought*. ScienceDaily. https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/06/220617111456.htm
Zhou, Y., Swidler, D., Searle, S., & Baldino, C. (2021, October). *Life-cycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions of Biomethane and Hydrogen Pathways in the European Union*. International Council on Clean Transportation. https://theicct.org/sites/default/files/publications/lca-biomethane-hydrogen-eu-oct21.pdf
Waterman, C. & Armus, M. (2024). Biogas or Bull****? The Deceptive Promise of Manure Biogas as a Methane Solution. Friends of the Earth, 33-38. https://foe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Factory-Farm-Gas-Brief_final-final.pdf

For years now, frontline communities and environmental advocates have raised environmental justice concerns about funding manure biogas production due to its reliance on concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs)—also known as factory farms.[2] These heavily polluting livestock facilities generate massive amounts of waste that threaten rural economies, public health, and quality of life for the surrounding Maryland populations, which are disproportionately communities of color and low-income communities.[3]

Factory farm gas systems are typically only feasible at the largest CAFOs[4] and rely on the existence and perpetuation of the most hazardous manure management practices, wet manure maintained in large lagoons or pits, that contribute to air and water pollution.[5] Meanwhile, manure biogas production entrenches this dirty system all while failing to address:

- Greenhouse gas emissions from feed production and enteric fermentation.
- Most forms of localized air and water pollution from CAFOs that threaten public health and the environment.
- The overuse of antibiotics administered to livestock, a driver of antibiotic resistance in humans.
- The threat of infectious diseases like avian influenza emerging from factory farms, potentially leading to another pandemic

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[2] Friends of the Earth et al. (June 13, 2023). [Letter to Secretary Vilsack and Undersecretary Torres Small]. Retrieved from https://foe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/REAP-Letter-USDA-June-2023.pdf
Friends of the Earth et al. (October 25, 2023). [Letter to Secretary Vilsack]. Retrieved from https://foe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final_-Sign-on_-Opposition-to-Factory-Farm-Gas-Funding-and-Practices-in-IRA.pdf

[3] Halden, R. U., & Schwab, K. J. (n.d.). *Environmental Impact of Industrial Farm Animal Production*. The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, 27–29. https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/6699-environmental-impact-of-industrial-farm-animal
Hribar, C. (2010). *Understanding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations and Their Impact on Communities*. National Association of Local Boards of Health, 2-3. https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/docs/understanding_cafos_nalboh.pdf
Hall, J., Galarraga, J., Berman, I., Edwards, C., Khanjar, N., et al. (2021). Environmental Injustice and Industrial Chicken Farming in Maryland. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(21), 11039. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182111039

[4] US EPA. (2014, December 22). *Is Anaerobic Digestion Right for Your Farm?* [Overviews and Factsheets]. https://www.epa.gov/agstar/anaerobic-digestion-right-your-farm

[5] Son, J.-Y., Miranda, M. L., & Bell, M. L. (2021). Exposure to concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and risk of mortality in North Carolina, USA. *The Science of the Total Environment*, *799*, 149407. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.149407
Donham, K. J., Wing, S., Osterberg, D., Flora, J. L., Hodne, C., Thu, K. M., & Thorne, P. S. (2006, November 14). Community Health and Socioeconomic Issues Surrounding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, *115*(2), 317–320. https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.8836
Halden, R. U., & Schwab, K. J. (n.d.). *Environmental Impact of Industrial Farm Animal Production*. The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, 27–29. https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/6699-environmental-impact-of-industrial-farm-animal
Hribar, C. (2010). *Understanding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations and Their Impact on Communities*. National Association of Local Boards of Health, 2-3.

- Farmers locked in unfair contracts or workers facing dangerous working conditions on factory farms and in slaughterhouses.
- The suffering of more than nine billion animals raised for food in inhumane conditions.

In fact, **factory farm gas production generates additional environmental and public health concerns for communities living near CAFOs**, including increased ammonia emissions during anaerobic digestion,[6] higher concentrations of nutrients in digestate that contribute to water pollution,[7] and new pipelines and trucks to transport manure or biogas.

Subsidizing manure biogas production also increases the competitive advantage for large-scale producers, contributes to industry consolidation, and crowds out funding for truly effective conservation and renewable energy practices. Digesters, which are used to break down waste and create the biogas, are expensive to construct and operate, making them economically feasible only for the largest farms and only with considerable public subsidies in most cases. This further tilts the playing field in favor of the largest livestock operators that are positioned to capitalize on policies and incentives rewarding manure biogas production.

Incentivizing manure biogas production in Maryland is also concerning as the largest and most active livestock sector is the poultry industry.[8] **Factory farm gas derived from poultry litter is especially problematic**: Raw poultry litter is dry and emits little methane under current production methods. Thus, in order to make an anaerobic digester feasible at a poultry operation, large volumes of water must be added to the manure.[9] This not only diverts precious water resources but also has the potential to create novel methane emissions from digester leakage.

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[6] Aneja, Viney P., S. Pal Arya, Ian C. Rumsey, D.-S. Kim, K. Bajwa, H. L. Arkinson, H. Semunegus, et al. (2008). Characterizing ammonia emissions from swine farms in eastern North Carolina: part 2--potential environmentally superior technologies for waste treatment. *Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association (1995)*, *58*(9), 1145–1157. https://doi.org/10.3155/1047-3289.58.9.1145
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. (n.d.). *Medical Management Guidelines for Ammonia*. https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/MMG/MMGDetails.aspx?mmgid=7&toxid=2
Holly, M. A., Larson, R. A., Powell, J. M., Ruark, M. D., & Aguirre-Villegas, H. (2017). Greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from digested and separated dairy manure during storage and after land application. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, *239*, 410–419. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agee.2017.02.007
[7] USDA. (2017, October). *Conservation Practice Standard Anaerobic Digester (Code 366)*. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/Anaerobic_Digester_366_CPS_Oct_2017.pdf
[8] *Poultry Pollution*. (n.d.). Sierra Club. Retrieved February 13, 2025, from https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/poultry-pollution
[9] Tingi, K., Lee, K., Worley, J., Risse, M., & Das, K.C. (2010, January). Anaerobic Digestion of Poultry Litter: A Review. *Applied Engineering in Agriculture*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273919895_Anaerobic_Digestion_of_Poultry_Litter_A_Review

Maryland tax dollars should be spent incentivizing effective climate solutions, not rewarding some of the state's biggest polluters[10] and perversely encouraging them to produce even more waste. We urge you to oppose this bill as written and instead support truly clean, renewable energy as well as farmers and ranchers employing regenerative agriculture practices that can effectively fight the climate crisis.

Sincerely,

Friends of the Earth
Sussex Health and Environment Network (SHEN)
Sentinels of Eastern Shore Health (SESH)
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Food Safety
Clean Water Action
Climate Communications Coalition
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs (CCAIC)
Envision Frederick County
Earthjustice
Families NOT Refineries
FarmSTAND
Food & Water Watch
Food Animal Concerns Trust
George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication
Maryland Latinos Unidos
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Maryland Legislative Coalition - Climate Justice Wing
Maryland Pesticide Education Network

[10] Shwe, E. (2020, October 21). *Report: Eastern Shore Has Unhealthy Levels of Nitrate in Drinking Water Due to CAFOs*. Maryland Matters. https://marylandmatters.org/2020/10/21/report-eastern-shore-has-unhealthy-levels-of-nitrate-in-drinking-water-due-to-cafos/

Testimony Opposing SB480 –Department of General Se
Uploaded by: Gabrielle Ross
Position: UNF

Testimony Opposing SB480 – Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 20, 2025

Position: OPPOSE

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Environment, Energy and Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing us to submit testimony in opposition to SB480 today. Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs (CCAIC) and other environmental advocates strongly oppose SB480 due to its harmful environmental impacts, the misallocation of taxpayer funds, and its misalignment with Maryland's clean energy and climate goals.

SB480 aims to expand and promote industrial-scale anaerobic digestion (AD) and biogas projects across the state, an approach that has already been shown to be financially and environmentally unsustainable. Similar legislation has been introduced in previous years and faced strong opposition from diverse environmental and community stakeholders. Despite this, SB480 has returned with language that prioritizes industry profits over public and environmental welfare, fast-tracking biogas projects without sufficient regulatory scrutiny or independent oversight.

The False Promise of Biogas: Biogas is being marketed as a clean and renewable energy source, but the reality is far different. Industrial anaerobic digesters do not eliminate waste; they merely alter its form. The digestion process leaves behind a concentrated byproduct called digestate, which retains the same nutrient pollution risks—particularly phosphorus and nitrogen—that contribute to the degradation of Maryland's waterways, including the Chesapeake Bay. Additionally, biogas production releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas, and is often tied to fossil fuel infrastructure through pipelines like the DelMar Pathways project, further entrenching our dependence on nonrenewable energy sources.

A Financially Wasteful and Environmentally Harmful Investment: Maryland taxpayers have already invested millions in anaerobic digestion projects that have failed to prove financial viability without massive state and federal subsidies. The University of Maryland has received substantial funding for pilot programs on the Eastern Shore, yet these projects have not demonstrated meaningful progress toward sustainable waste management. The financial feasibility study conducted by the University of Maryland found that anaerobic digesters are not economically viable without continuous and excessive public funding. Rather than diverting resources toward these costly and ineffective solutions, Maryland should prioritize truly clean energy alternatives such as solar, wind, and energy efficiency programs.

Environmental and Public Health Concerns: The proposed expansion of anaerobic digestion through SB480 raises significant public health concerns. The bill lacks provisions to assess and mitigate the risks associated with the transport, processing, and deposition of waste. There is no mention of studying the presence of PFAS/PFOA contamination in digestate, even though these forever chemicals pose a significant threat to farmland, water supplies, and public health. Additionally, the emissions from anaerobic digesters—including ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and volatile organic compounds—can degrade air quality and disproportionately impact overburdened communities already suffering from industrial pollution.

Misguided Priorities and Industry Influence: SB480 is structured to benefit the biogas industry while sidelining critical environmental and community stakeholders. The bill language suggests a predetermined outcome favoring industrial-scale anaerobic digestion rather than an impartial assessment of its impacts. This approach disregards previous studies and recommendations that have pointed to the economic and environmental risks associated with large-scale digesters. Maryland should not be subsidizing a waste management scheme that exacerbates environmental justice issues and places additional burdens on rural and low-income communities.

For all these reasons, we strongly **oppose SB480** and urge the committee to reject this bill. Maryland must uphold its commitment to genuine clean energy solutions and responsible environmental stewardship, rather than investing in failed industry schemes that endanger our communities and natural resources.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Ross, Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs (CCAIC)

Maria Payan, Executive Director, Sentinels for Eastern Shore Health

Monica Brooks, President Wicomico NAACP #7028B

Sources:
1. Financial feasibility of alternative animal waste management ... (n.d.). Retrieved February 13, 2023, from

https://arch.umd.edu/sites/default/files/docs/publications/Financial%20Feasibility%20of%20AWTF%20Projects%20January%202018.pdf

2. Lansing, S., & Hassanein, A. (n.d.). Factsheet PFED Poultry Litter Digester. Retrieved February 13, 2025, from https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/counties/UMD%20Factsheet%20PFED%20Poultry%20Litter%20Digester.pdf

3. Permitting guidance for Maryland anaerobic digestion facilities. (n.d.). Retrieved February 13, 2025, from https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Documents/Anaerobic%20Digestion%20Facility%20Permitting%20Guidance%20-Revised%20Sept%202022.pdf

4. https://enst.umd.edu/extension/anaerobic-digestion

5. Land and Materials Administration Resource Management Program. (n.d.). YARD WASTE, FOOD RESIDUALS, and OTHER ORGANIC MATERIALS DIVERSION AND INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY GROUP. Retrieved from https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Land/RMP/Documents/HB%20171%20final%20report.pdf

6. “Biogas or Bull****?” Friends of the Earth, 25 Aug. 2017, foe.org/resources/biogas-or-bull/. Accessed 2 Mar. 2024.

SB 480
Uploaded by: Peter & Rhonda Tomko
Position: UNF

Peter & Rhonda Tomko
28263 Log Cabin Rd
Salisbury MD 21801
609-548-3825

SB0480

Position: OPPOSE

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

As residents of Salisbury, Wicomico County, MD we are concerned about environmental justice for our families and community, and we are writing to express our **strong** opposition to SB0480, the *Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment bill*.

This bill does NOT invest in clean, renewable energy sources. As written, it is blatantly vague – indicating our communities can be locked into a system reliant on generating harmful sources of pollution *while producing energy.* **This is not a clean solution**. Biogas production often relies on large-scale, concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to fuel them. These operations, especially poultry, already generate disproportionate amounts of waste, threaten their rural economies and the local public's health, and negatively alter a community's quality of life. The passage of this bill will add to an already immense load of pollution and contaminants on our communities.

Currently, many environmental permit applications **do not include a public engagement process**, and do not take into consideration the already existing cumulative harms posed by multiple and historic sources of pollution. We do not need additional pollution sources, like biogas infrastructure, introduced. Instead, we need CLEAN solutions to current waste issues, transparency, and a voice in what drastically affects our community and our families.

Incentivizing biogas production is particularly concerning for us as we live in the middle of the commercial poultry industry - the largest livestock sector. Attempts to utilize poultry litter in the creation of biogas would put an undue burden on our residential/agricultural community. WE DO NOT WANT TO BE A DIRTY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX under the guise of "clean energy".

Our family has four generations living here, on a small agricultural parcel. We feed our family and neighbors with our bounty. Our entire purpose is to regenerate the land, and NOT impose negative by-products upon our community by using regenerative- and permaculture-practices to close our own loop of waste management, and we cherish the fresh air and clean life we have built here. WE DO NOT WANT THE FALSE PROMISE OF CLEAN ENERGY proposed by this bill.

Please strongly consider our request to OPPOSE this bill.

Sincerely,
Peter & Rhonda Tomko
Salisbury, Wicomico County, MD

SB0480_DNR_LOI_EEE_2-20-25.pdf
Uploaded by: Emily Wilson
Position: INFO

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 20, 2025

BILL NUMBER: **Senate Bill 480 - First Reader**

SHORT TITLE: **Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment**

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT'S POSITION

This legislation requires the Power Plant Research Program (PPRP) to pay for a study to be conducted by the University System of Maryland. PPRP's current fiscal and operational constraints include increased operating costs associated with the escalating cost of consultants, a 400% increase in the number of Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) cases in 2024, and stagnant Environmental Trust Fund (ETF) monies which have decreased since its inception in 1972, The statutory priority of PPRP is CPCN cases.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Environmental Trust Fund, which funds PPRP, is statutorily required to focus its funds on energy generation-related projects.

BILL EXPLANATION

Under this legislation DGS, in consultation with others, would establish a biogas procurement program and collect certain data for the University System of Maryland, which would then conduct a study on the carbon lifecycle using money provided by PPRP.

Contact: Emily Wilson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services (Acting)
emilyh.wilson@maryland.gov ♦ 410-260-8426 (office) ♦ 443-223-1176 (cell)

SB0480- LOI.docx - Google Docs.pdf
Uploaded by: John Woolums
Position: INFO

SB 480 - Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment

Position: Letter of Information
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Date: February 20, 2025
From: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Department of General Services (DGS) appreciates the opportunity to provide information regarding Senate Bill 480 - Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment.

Senate Bill 480 proposes to establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program within DGS to procure biogas for use in the State's transportation and building sectors. Additionally, the bill requires an evaluation of the environmental and economic benefits of replacing fossil natural gas with biogas.

Establishing this program would necessitate comprehensive market research, issuing a competitive sealed procurement, and conducting extensive data collection and analysis over a period of more than one year. To effectively implement and manage this program, DGS would require additional staffing, at a minimum hiring one dedicated personnel member.

However, DGS notes that it is not necessary to issue a procurement to evaluate the potential environmental and economic benefits of transitioning from fossil natural gas to biogas. The Department has the capability to conduct an analysis of environmental benefits and price differentials without the immediate purchase of biogas. This would allow the State to assess the viability of such a transition without committing to procurement before a thorough review.

DGS remains committed to exploring opportunities for clean energy utilization and supports initiatives that align with the State's sustainability and energy efficiency goals. We look forward to further discussions with stakeholders to determine the most effective and fiscally responsible approach to evaluating and implementing clean energy solutions.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please do not hesitate to reach out if further clarification is needed.

Contact: John R. Woolums, Esq., Director of Government and Legislative Affairs,
(410) 260-2908 (O), (667) 434-0008 (M), john.woolums@maryland.gov

SB0480 - LOI - Department of General Services - Cl

Uploaded by: Landon Fahrig

Position: INFO

Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: SB 480 - Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program - Establishment
DATE: February 20, 2025

MEA Position: LETTER OF INFORMATION

This bill would require the Department of General Services (DGS) to establish a biogas procurement program in the Department and to issue a solicitation for biogas. The purpose of the program is to procure biogas for use as fuel in the State's transportation and building sectors.

Renewable natural gas (RNG) is a pipeline-quality gas that is fully interchangeable with conventional natural gas. RNG is essentially biogas (the gaseous product of the decomposition of organic matter) that has been processed to purity standards. Like conventional natural gas, RNG can be used as a transportation fuel in the form of compressed natural gas (CNG) or liquefied natural gas (LNG).

While there are benefits to RNG, there are also challenges including cost and availability. RNG has a significant cost in comparison to other energy sources. Today, a million BTUs (MMBTU) of natural gas costs less than $4, while a study prepared for the American Gas Foundation indicated about 44 percent of prospective RNG projects can be developed at a cost of $7 to $20 per MMBTU, with a median cost of approximately $18.[1]

The lack of availability at scale and the cost of RNG means that it is a scarce resource in the combination of approaches that should be utilized for decarbonization and therefore should be used only in instances where it is most difficult to decarbonize. Namely, RNG is best used for industrial and transportation decarbonization (areas where decarbonization is most challenging), whereas building decarbonization should remain reliant upon readily available and cost-effective electrification and energy efficiency measures.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Landon Fahrig, Legislative Liaison, directly (landon.fahrig@maryland.gov, 410.931.1537).

[1] gasfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AGF-2019-RNG-Study-Full-Report-FINAL-12-18-19.pdf