

Testimony of Lisa Krausz

In Support of HB 1058 - The Emission Standards, Ambient Air Quality Standards, and Solid Waste Management - Local Authority

Greetings. My name is Lisa Krausz. I am a resident of River Hill Village in Clarksville, Maryland. I am a co-founder of the Stop Grace Plastic Burning Project, which was founded in August of 2024 to stop a planned plastic R&D research facility near to my community by the W.R. Grace & Company.

I am testifying today in support of HB 1058 in order to clarify and correct language in current state law that will empower Marylanders to create local air pollution and waste management laws for their county/municipal jurisdictions that are more protective than federal and state minimums. While federal and state environmental laws already authorize this, these rights have been questioned in federal courts. This bill would make state law more clear so that counties and municipalities can fulfill their duties to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of their residents as they find necessary and appropriate.

This need is particularly important as my community faces a threat to chronic exposure to toxic emissions from a local project. Our county residents need to be able to have the ability to have more say in the quality of the air they breathe.

Meanwhile state and federal laws already authorize local governments to set more protective local standards to address their local situations, but poor wording in state law – as minor as writing “section” instead of “subsection” – has led some to the opposite interpretation, putting local clean air laws at risk.

Federal environmental regulations (that the state typically follows) are under attack, and our local governments should have the power to protect their residents when the state is slow to act.

The federal Clean Air Act has authorized local clean air laws since 1970, and Maryland state law has done so since 1957! Let's make sure that these rights are clear.

Please support HB 1058 and clarify the law so that Marylanders can get the protections we deserve.