SB553 - PHI - FAV - Commission to Advance Lithium-

Uploaded by: Allyson Black-Woodson

Position: FAV

February 24, 2026

Support – Senate Bill 553 Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) and Delmarva Power & Light Company (Delmarva Power) support **Senate Bill 553 Commission to Advance Lithium–Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment**. The legislation reestablishes the Commission to advance lithium-ion battery safety in Maryland. The Commission is required to study and make legislative, regulatory, programmatic, or other recommendations related to best practices and guidelines for lithium-ion batteries. By December 1, 2026, the commission must submit an interim report on the progress and status of the commission to the Legislative Policy Committee. By December 1, 2027, the commission must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

Pepco and Delmarva Power are constantly evaluating new technologies and services to build a smarter, reliable energy grid to withstand the impacts of climate change and ensure our customers have reliable service. Energy storage systems provide benefits to the electric grid and utility customers by enabling the transition to a clean grid with distributed renewable resources. Additionally, energy storage systems create system efficiencies that can reduce costs and save money for utilities and customers, bolster grid reliability and resilience, improve system capabilities to withstand shocks and stressors and promote economic development and job creation in Maryland communities.

Pepco and Delmarva Power appreciate the value that the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland has provided to help bring stakeholders together and work collaboratively to ensure that the increased usage of batteries in the clean energy transition occurs in a safe and well thought out manner, using best practices and incorporating lessons learned. Pepco and Delmarva Power appreciate the inclusion of a member of a public utility on the Commission to further enhance our learnings as we continue to envision battery storage as a technology to bring benefits to our customers. For the reasons stated, Pepco and Delmarva Power respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 553.

Amber Perry | Anne Klase | Allyson Black-Woodson | Poetri Deal | 410 980 5347

SB0553-EEE_MACo_SUP.pdf
Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko
Position: FAV

MARYLAND Association of COUNTIES

Senate Bill 553

Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Date: February 24, 2026

From: Dominic Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 553. This bill renews the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland, extending its charge to evaluate policy challenges and solutions regarding battery safety.

In 2024, MACo helped lead the effort to establish this Commission in response to strong county concerns about the increasing incidence of lithium-ion (LI) battery failures. As Maryland's economy and daily life become more electrified, LI batteries are embedded in a rapidly expanding range of consumer products. While individual failure rates may be relatively low, the growing volume of batteries in circulation increases overall exposure and the potential for incidents affecting public safety and local response systems. Counties appreciate the Commission's work to-date and agree that the policy and implementation work remains ongoing.

SB 553 extends the Commission's charge with making legislative, regulatory, programmatic, and other recommendations related to LI battery safety. The scope of this mission remains broad and includes:

- Best practices, standards, and guidelines:
  - To prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion battery fires in consumer, transportation, and utility applications;
  - To prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion fires at recycling facilities; and
  - For reusing, recycling, and decommissioning lithium-ion batteries;
- The viability of extended producer responsibility for lithium-ion batteries;
- Training, education, and other information to better inform the public regarding lithium-ion battery safety; and
- Any other global issues the Commission may consider useful for enhancing the safety and reuse of batteries in the state.

By re-empowering the Commission to develop clear, actionable recommendations, SB 553 will better position Maryland to protect residents, first responders, and public infrastructure as LI battery use continues to expand. As such, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 553.

SB0553_FAV_NWRA_Comm. Adv. Lithium-Ion Battery Saf
Uploaded by: Drew Vetter
Position: FAV

Collect
Recycle
Innovate

National Waste
& Recycling Association℠

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 24, 2026
Senate Bill 553 – *Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment*
POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association (NWRA-MD) is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in the State of Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. NWRA-MD and its members **support** Senate Bill 553.

Senate Bill 553 reestablishes the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland with an updated membership, including representatives from industry, government, first responders, insurers, and recycling stakeholders.

The problem of lithium-ion battery fires in waste and recycling facilities has become a major safety and operational challenge for the industry. As these batteries are used in an ever-wider array of consumer devices, from phones and laptops to e-bikes and vape pens, many end up improperly discarded in regular recycling and trash streams, where sorting equipment can crush or damage them and trigger fires. Industry reporting and research estimate that more than 5,000 fires occur annually at recycling facilities alone, with an average of around 18 fires per materials recovery facility (MRF) each year, and that MRFs are frequently the hardest-hit segment of the waste system. Publicly documented waste and recycling facility fires in the U.S. and Canada grew to record levels in recent years, with hundreds of incidents reported annually, and many more likely going unreported. These fires not only pose serious risks to workers and emergency responders but also cause costly disruptions, destroy equipment, and increase insurance and operating costs for facilities.

NWRA has been actively working to reduce lithium-ion battery fires in the waste and recycling system by focusing on industry guidance, partnerships, and public education. NWRA has joined with organizations, such as the Recycled Materials Association and the Solid Waste Association of North America to release practical guides that help MRFs identify, handle, and manage lithium-ion batteries safely as they enter recycling streams, with recommendations on operations, employee training, storage, and emergency response to minimize fire risks. The Association also issues joint policy statements and supports take-back programs and proper disposal practices to keep batteries out of curbside waste where they can ignite, while planning national public awareness campaigns to educate consumers about safe battery disposal and collection options.

The report issued by the Commission in November 2025 provided Maryland with the first comprehensive examination of lithium-ion battery risks, including consumer use, transportation, utilities, and recycling. That report identified gaps in current practices and offered thoughtful recommendations for improving safety and informing public policy.

NWRA-MD supports continuing to bring all impacted stakeholders together to examine this issue and make recommendations on how to address it. Additionally, NWRA-MD thanks the bill sponsors for including us on the task force and requests a favorable report for Senate Bill 553.

For more information:
Andrew G. Vetter
J. Steven Wise
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000

Testimony SUPPORT SB0553.pdf
Uploaded by: Emil Nusbaum
Position: FAV

February 20, 2026

The Honorable Chair Brian Feldman
Honorable Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Maryland Senate

RE: SB0553 – SUPPORT – Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

The Automotive Recyclers Association (ARA) appreciates the opportunity to provide the following testimony in support of Senate Bill (SB 0553), which is legislation supporting the reestablishment of the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland.

As a member of the Commission, and having had the privilege to serve as Chair, the Commission worked diligently to fulfill its initial mandate. It produced a thorough Final Report to the General Assembly investigating the risks associated with lithium-ion battery fires. The findings and recommendations in that report serve as a foundational starting point, identifying cross-sector risks and formalizing recommendations consistent with national best practices. This work provides an important resource to advance both public policy and public safety.

During the Commission's initial term, several areas were identified as warranting additional study. Reestablishing the Commission will allow for further examination and recommendations related to battery-initiated risks within Maryland's transportation network, impacts within insurance markets, and the incorporation of emerging best practices and federal regulations.

For these reasons, ARA respectfully requests that the Committee support the passage of SB 0553.

Respectfully submitted,

Emil Nusbaum
Vice President of Strategy, Government and Regulatory Affairs
Automotive Recyclers Association (ARA)
9113 Church Street
Manassas, VA 20110
571-208-0428 Ext. 4
emil@a-r-a.org

SB 553 - MoCo DEP - (GA 26) FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Garrett Fitzgerald
Position: FAV

Montgomery County
Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550 **ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270**

SB 553 **DATE: February 24, 2026**

SPONSOR: Senator Augustine

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment

CONTACT PERSON: Garrett Fitzgerald (garrett.fitzgerald@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support (Department of Environmental Protection)

Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment

The bill would extend the work of the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland (the Commission). Established following the passage of House Bill 468 and Senate Bill 532 in 2024, the Commission was charged with studying and making recommendations related to several battery safety issues including: best practices and standards to prevent, detect and suppress lithium-ion battery fires in consumer, transportation and utility applications and recycling facilities; best practices and standards for reusing, recycling, and decommissioning lithium-ion batteries; the viability of extended producer responsibility requirements for lithium-ion batteries; training and education for first responders and the public; and other related issues.

The Commission completed a final report on November 25, 2025, summarizing its findings and recommendations related to the aforementioned issues. That report also included a recommendation to extend the Commission's mandate for an additional two years to enable further study of certain complex and emerging issues such as: battery risks at the Port of Baltimore, roads, rail and tunnels throughout Maryland; impacts of battery risks on insurance providers and insurance coverage availability; Maryland's current waste classifications for lithium-ion batteries and how they affect collection, storage, and recycling as well as how this could be better addressed in the permitting and regulation of solid waste facilities; and the integration of pending federal regulations and emerging third-party standards.

Montgomery County staff have participated as members of the Commission to date and support the recommendation to extend the Commission to further study and develop recommendations related to these important issues.

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection respectfully requests that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 553.

MDE SB 553 SUP.pdf
Uploaded by: Jeremy D Baker
Position: FAV

The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

Senate Bill 553
Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment

Position: Support
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Date: February 24, 2026
From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** SB 553**.**

Bill Summary
SB 553 would reform the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland with an altered membership and mandate, and require the Commission to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2027. The commission would continue evaluating best practices for fire prevention, detection, and suppression during the reuse, recycling, and decommissioning of batteries. It would also investigate the feasibility of implementing extended producer responsibility programs for lithium-ion batteries. Furthermore, the Commission would develop training and educational resources to improve battery safety awareness for both the public and first responders. Finally, it would explore any global developments that could help the state enhance the safety and reuse of batteries.

Position Rationale
Lithium-ion batteries power a vast array of modern products and have provided incredible benefits. The technology is found in many consumer products, e-mobility devices, and, in larger formats, batteries utilized for grid stabilization and vehicle transportation functions that are integral to Maryland's clean energy transition. The widespread use of batteries requires us to develop defined management practices, resources, and educational support, particularly for their end-of-life stage. Lithium-ion batteries are generally very safe to use, there were still approximately 430 fire incidents at material recycling facilities nationwide attributed to battery fires in just the last year. With significant investment slated for Maryland's recycling infrastructure resulting from the establishment of the Packaging and Paper Products Extended Producer Responsibility program, it is imperative the State define plans to best manage this material because battery fires put those future investments at risk.

MDE's Land and Materials Administration (LMA) staff lead the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO) Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Taskforce, and is developing a nationwide guide on lithium-ion battery management. Establishing the Commission and ensuring a leading role for MDE would greatly encourage the development of sensible, cost-effective, and environmentally sound policy for the state.

Accordingly, MDE asks for a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 553.

Contact: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations
Cell: 240-548-3321, Email: jeremy.baker@maryland.gov

2026 MD SB 553 - Testimony in Support by Justin Sh

Uploaded by: Justin Short

Position: FAV

Recycled Materials Association

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support of SB 553: Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

Chair Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

My name is Justin Short, and I am in support of SB 553 as Assistant Vice President of State Affairs for the Recycled Materials Association (ReMA), as the representative of a battery recycling trade group on the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland from 2024 to 2025, and as a constituent of Montgomery County. ReMA represents 1,700 companies across the entire recycled materials supply chain that play a critical role in providing materials to America's manufacturing industries, including battery, electronics, metals, paper, plastics, residential, and tire recyclers.

The Commission served an essential role in bringing public and private stakeholders together to explore the challenges that have developed as lithium-ion and other rechargeable batteries have become part of everyday life. However, the scope of the challenges that we were identifying only continued to grow during the Commission's original term.

Persistent battery risks at the Port of Baltimore and other infrastructure sites necessitate continued collaboration. Ongoing challenges are further complicated by shifting insurance availability, rising provider costs, and new third-party standards. Additionally, several new proposals for the Commission's duties were introduced too late in the original term for a full discussion. These are critical issues for public safety as well as the continued safe operations of the recycled materials industry that the Commission did not have time to fully explore. As other states look to create their own groups to explore battery-related challenges, the Commission can serve a role in interstate collaboration by assisting those groups and gain additional insights into the process.

The majority of ReMA's more than 1,700 member companies, regardless of their location or commodities recycled, have been greatly impacted by lithium-ion batteries entering non-battery recycling streams; battery and electronics recyclers have been hurt by the loss of valuable products and materials that could have been reused, repaired, refurbished, repurposed, or recycled. The recycled materials industry continues to feel growing anxiety over the dangers that batteries of all sizes and formats present to their operations when not collected and managed properly.

ReMA's own Battery Policy Work Group was formed in 2024 with representatives across our membership to develop policy guidelines on how to address the end-of-life management of batteries, and while we have developed public Positions on Non-Embedded Small and Medium Format Batteries as well as Propulsion Batteries, we are only beginning to explore the scope of challenges presented by embedded batteries that are not easily removed from the products they power.

As the recycled materials industry continues to explore solutions to end-of-life battery collection and management issues, we hope that the General Assembly will choose to continue their own efforts to advance battery safety in Maryland. By aligning our industry's technical expertise with the State's legislative goals, we can build a safer, more circular economy for all Marylanders. We look forward to our continued dialogue on these critical issues.

Sincerely,

Justin Short
AVP of State Affairs
Recycled Materials Association
1250 H Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 662-8508
JShort@RecycledMaterials.org

https://www.recycledmaterials.org/
https://www.recycledmaterials.org/advocacy-compliance/policy-and-position-statements/

ReMA Position on Non-Embedded Small and Medium Format EOL Battery Management
ReMA Position on Propulsion Battery EOL Management

Maryland Recycling Network - Favorable - SB0553 -
Uploaded by: Kitty McIlroy
Position: FAV

February 24, 2026

To: Maryland Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee

Re: SB0553 - Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment

Favorable

As current President of the Maryland Recycling Network (MRN), I am writing in support of SB 553. I bring my experience managing electronics recycling contracts, including lithium-ion battery recycling, over the last 12 years at the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority. I am not speaking on behalf of the Authority.

Maryland Recycling Network members include public recycling and sustainability managers, private sector and non-profit recyclers and individuals who support recycling. We promote sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's") of materials otherwise destined for disposal and the purchase of products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through education programs, advocacy activities to affect public policy, technical assistance efforts, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs in the private sector and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We thank Senator Augustine for sponsoring this bill, and also thank Senator Love for being one of the original sponsors of HB 468, which passed in 2024, to establish the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland. I am a Member of that Commission on behalf of Maryland Recycling Network.

The law establishing the Commission charged the Commission with conducting a comprehensive study for the purpose of making legislative, regulatory, programmatic, or other recommendations regarding:

- Best practices, standards, and guidelines to prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion battery fires in:
    - Consumer and transportation applications

    - Utility applications, including a review of the National Fire Prevention 855 Standards for Grid Scale Storage and Safety
- Preventing, detecting, and suppressing lithium-ion fires at recycling facilities
- Reusing, recycling, and decommissioning lithium-ion batteries
- The viability of extended producer responsibility for lithium-ion batteries
- Training, education, and other information to better inform the public and first responders regarding lithium-ion battery safety
- Any other global issues the Commission may consider useful for enhancing the safety and reuse of batteries in the State.

The Commission's membership comprised a diverse set of experts that provided technical, public safety, environmental, and operational expertise throughout the Commission's work.

Our Commission did also provide a comprehensive set of recommendations in a 68-page Final Report, dated November 25, 2025.

We feel that the Commission has done great work with establishing these initial recommendations, however, per Key Legislative Recommendation #7 (page 6 of the Final Report), a re-establishment and extension would allow us to continue research and recommendation on the following areas:

- Battery risks at the Port of Baltimore, roads, rail and tunnels throughout Maryland
- Impacts of battery risks on insurance providers and insurance coverage availability
- Maryland's current waste classifications for lithium-ion batteries and how they affect collection, storage, and recycling as well as how this could be better addressed in the permitting and regulation of solid waste facilities; and
- The integration of pending federal regulations and emerging third-party standards

Additionally, we feel that there is need for additional subject matter experts to be added to the Commission (per Section 7.2 of the Final Report), including representatives from the Maryland Port Administration, the Maryland Department of the Environment (Land and Materials Administration), the Maryland Department of Transportation, commercial vehicle shippers, and representatives from the property casualty and commercial insurance industries.

For reference, the Commission report and supporting materials have been posted on the Office of the State Fire Marshal's website, located below:

https://mdsp.maryland.gov/firemarshal/Pages/%E2%80%8BHB468_Commission_Advance_Lithium-Ion_Battery_Safety_Maryland.aspx

Please also see the attachment to this testimony for further background and concern regarding lithium-ion battery thermal runaway events and fires.

We strongly urge passage of SB 553. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kitty McIlroy
President
Maryland Recycling Network

The Maryland Recycling Network stands ready to serve as a sounding board and resource for legislators and others interested in pursuing our mission. Please do not hesitate to contact MRN via email phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the above.

Health and Safety Specific Information Regarding Lithium-Ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries are found in a variety of small to medium format electronic products including hearing aids, cell phones, e-bikes, scooters, laptops, tablets and vaping devices, in addition to large format products such as electric vehicles and stationary battery energy storage systems (BESS)/ battery storage power station or battery energy grid storage (BEGS).

When punctured or otherwise compromised, a chemical reaction can cause a fire or explosion. Chemical reactions during the fire make them burn longer and hotter and make them difficult and hazardous to extinguish. They escalate much faster, are prone to reignition and can burn for days.

Lithium-ion battery management is one of the most pressing issues, if not the most pressing issue, in the solid waste management and recycling industry right now.

Battery fire incidents have been exponentially increasing in Maryland and across the country and world. We've already seen fires at collection sites, MRFs and on solid waste trucks in Maryland. Battery fire incidents severely impact and endanger site staff, capital infrastructure like MRFs, transfer stations, waste facilities and landfills, collection trucks/drivers, other processing equipment, insurance rates (limiting capability to even be insured), in addition to first responders, who continue to receive more and more call outs due to battery fires. We need to protect our essential workers, first responders, and recycling infrastructure here. Re-establishing this Commission will help us do that.

The solid waste management sector is already consistently ranked as one of the most dangerous, deadliest labor sectors in the United States:

"Waste and recycling collection was fourth deadliest occupation in 2023…The latest Bureau of Labor Statistics data showed an increase in the rate of fatalities for the refuse and recyclable materials collection occupation. The number of fatalities in MRFs also increased… Waste and recycling jobs remain a potentially hazardous occupation, despite ongoing efforts to get out of the top 10 deadliest job category by investing in more safety training and technology for vehicles and facilities. The only occupations that had higher fatality rates in 2023 were logging, fishing and hunting and roofing…Solid Waste Association of North America CEO Amy Lestition Burke said in a statement that the organization was "very disappointed" in the results. "This data reinforces the need for safety improvements. The individuals who collect waste and recycling are making communities livable and sustainable. We all have a role to play to protect these everyday heroes.. "The increase in solid waste collection worker fatalities is concerning, and occurred from coast to coast and at small haulers, the large publicly traded companies, and local governments," said David Biderman, a safety consultant and former SWANA CEO, in an emailed statement that also noted this was one of the

highest rates in years. “There are a wide variety of contributing factors to these tragic incidents. We know what these factors are, and need to address them.”[1]

“Solid waste collection workers are still on the list of the ten most dangerous jobs. From the truck itself to the collected garbage (***lithium-ion batteries,*** syringes, glass, and chemicals: MSW has a lot of unexpected hazards in store), from distractions like mobile phones to bad weather conditions, from pedestrians to other drivers: The sources of danger are manifold. And more waste means more risks... Safety campaigns and awareness have an effect…SWANA will continue leading industry efforts to reduce them even further and fulfill our Strategic Plan goal of getting solid waste collection workers off the list of the ten most dangerous jobs.”[2]

Unfortunately, many people put these batteries in their recycling and trash bins. A recent National Solid Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) report estimates more than 5,000 fires a year at recycling and waste facilities and in collection trucks. While many recycling processing facility fires can be quickly contained, several facilities have been damaged so badly they had to be closed and rebuilt. The loss to the facility owner can be more than $50 million dollars. In addition, local recycling programs relying on those facilities are forced to scramble to find new processing facilities for their recyclables. Insurance companies are also backing away from insuring these types of solid waste and recycling facilities due to fire concerns.

The Commission will continue to study the severe human health and safety issues from toxic chemical battery flammable gas, smoke, fire and explosion incidents (which can be fatal, even from inhalation).This Commission will also continue investigating increased public education, comprehensive protocols with local fire departments, heat spot and fire detection and suppression equipment, as well as report on emerging technologies and industries transitioning away from liquid state to solid state electrolyte-based batteries, which are less susceptible to fires. These efforts will ensure that these batteries, so essential to so many products, can continue to be useful without causing fires and destabilizing our critical infrastructure.

Additionally, the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA), the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA), and the Recycled Materials Association (ReMA) released a joint "Guide for Developing Lithium-Ion Battery Management Practices at Materials Recovery Facilities" to offer practical steps for materials recovery facilities (MRFs) to better identify, manage, and respond to improperly discarded lithium-ion batteries. The guide is available here. But the best guide is keeping them out of the recycling stream and the trash. After all, the most effective education and

[1] https://www.wastedive.com/news/waste-recycling-worker-fatality-rate-2024/735975/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%20Weekly%20Roundup:%20Waste%20Dive:%20Daily%20Dive%2012-21-2024&utm_term=Waste%20Dive%20Weekender

[2] Workplace saftey: Getting waste collection off the list of the most dangerous jobs | WMW

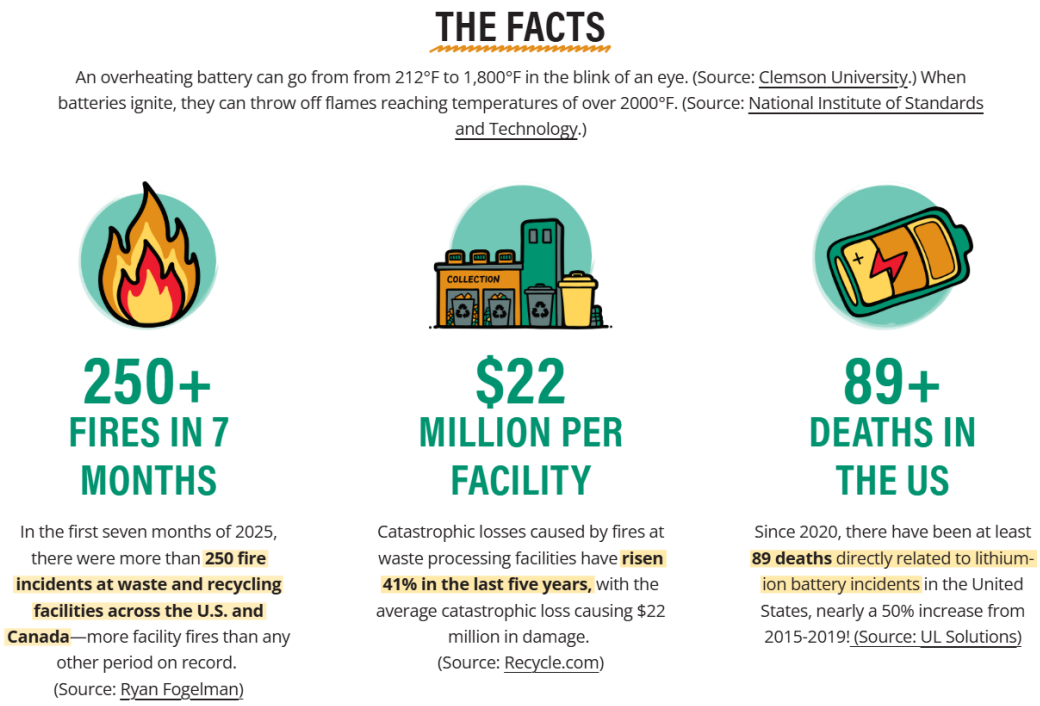
enforcement efforts to improve our recycling programs come to naught if the collection truck or processing facility burns down.

A survey of our members reported fires on tipping floors at recycling processing facilities, fires in trash collection trucks, fires at waste transfer stations and landfills, and even overnight fires in separately collected and stored electronics containment areas for electronics recycling contracts. Fortunately, none of these events caused serious damage. However, a 2022 fire at a recycling processing facility in York, Pennsylvania, which is used by some Maryland communities, caused it to shut down.

Additionally, WM's three recycling facilities in Maryland (including the MRF in Elkridge, MD) reported the following:

- 30-40 small scale battery fires (smoke fires) in 2025
- 5-7 medium sized incidents in 2025

Additionally, there were 245 fires reported across 64 waste facilities (during 2013–2020) caused or likely caused by lithium-ion batteries. Affected facilities included MRFs (Materials Recovery Facilities), solid waste trucks, landfills, transfer stations, public drop-off points, and electronics and battery recyclers. 78% of MRFs required emergency response for fires, with 43% facing monetary impacts. Lithium-ion battery fires are increasing due to the rise in portable, chargeable electronics and electric mobility such as scooters, bikes and vehicles. For full details, please see the EPA's Lithium-Ion Battery 2021 Report.



Maryland Recycling Network
c/o Mariner Management • PO Box 1640 • Columbia, MD 21044
Phone: (443) 741-8740 • www.MarylandRecyclingNetwork.org

Source: Safe Battery Disposal

EXTREME HEAT

When a battery overheats, it can jump from 212°F to 1,800°F in a second—and produce flames as hot as 2,000 °F! (Sources: Clemson University; National Institute of Standards and Technology.)

TOXIC GAS

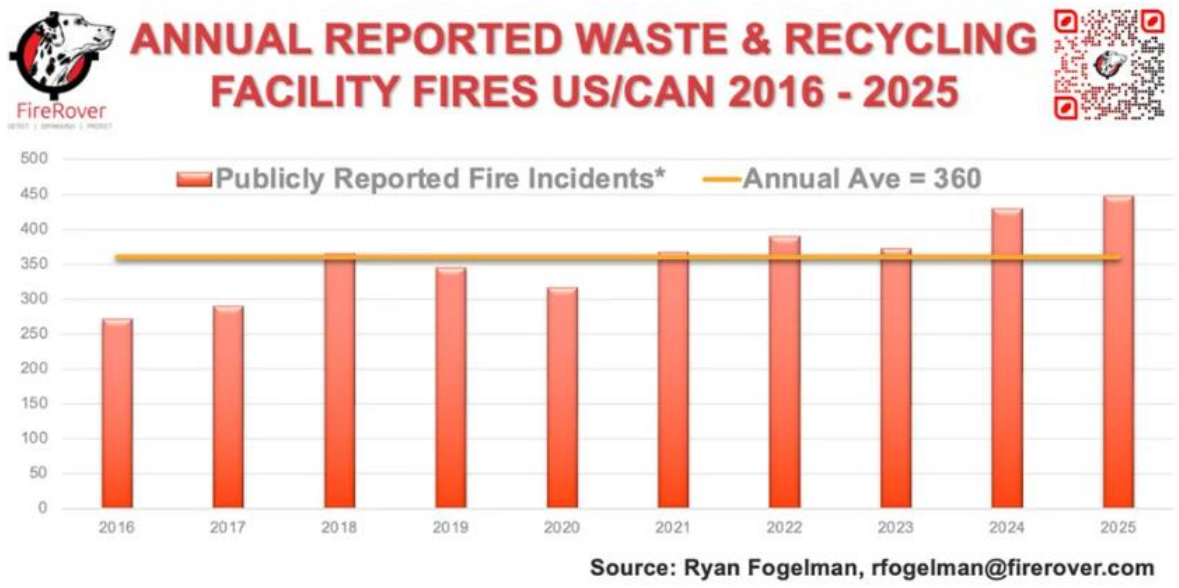
As lithium battery fires burn, they release toxic gasses like hydrogen fluoride and carbon monoxide. If inhaled, these fumes can lead to trouble breathing, eye and skin irritation, and in some cases, even death.

LONGER BURNING

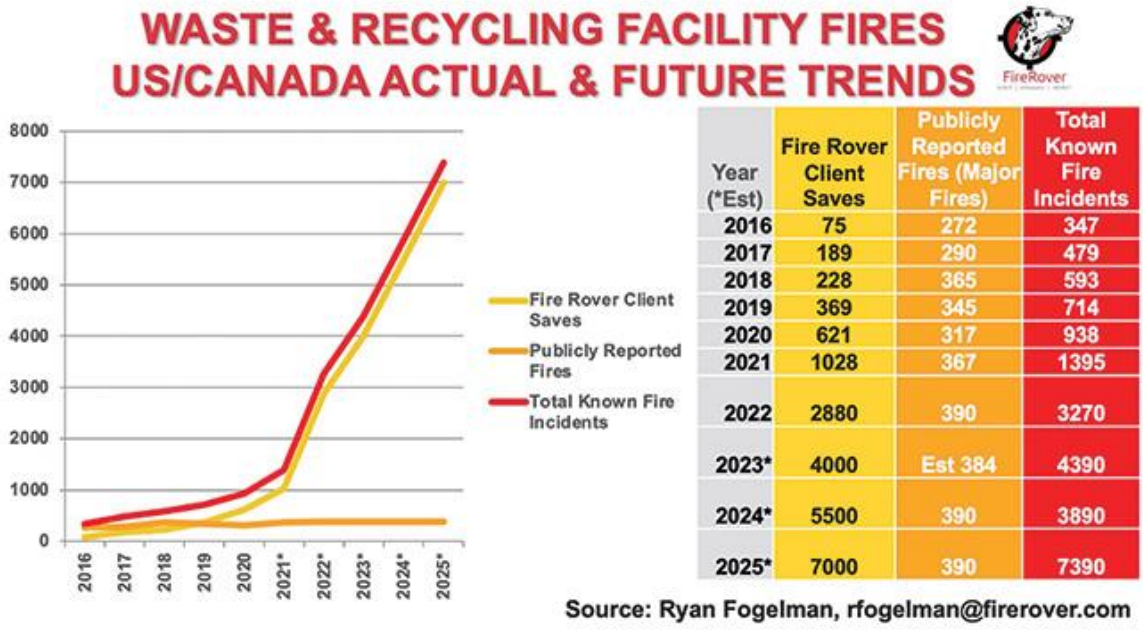
Battery fires don't just burn hotter—they burn longer, too. These fires are extremely difficult for firefighters to put out, and they can quickly reignite without a moment's notice.

Source: Facts — Safe Battery Disposal

Slide from 1/27/26 EPA Virtual Roundtable Meeting



As of January 2026, "this year was the worst on record for publicly reported fires since I began consolidating and sharing the data in 2016. We finished the year with 448 publicly reported waste and recycling facility fires in the U.S. and Canada, which is more than last year's record of 430 fire incidents and nearly 25% above the annual average of 360 fire incidents."[3]



Year (*Est)	Fire Rover Client Saves	Publicly Reported Fires (Major Fires)	Total Known Fire Incidents
2016	75	272	347
2017	189	290	479
2018	228	365	593
2019	369	345	714
2020	621	317	938
2021	1028	367	1395
2022	2880	390	3270
2023*	4000	Est 384	4390
2024*	5500	390	3890
2025*	7000	390	7390

"Then came the lithium-ion battery threat that revealed itself in 2018 in the form of increased fire incidents across the globe…This problem is not going away. In fact, the number of lithium-ion batteries forecasted to enter the waste and recycling streams is

[3] January Fire Report, Date Accessed: February 15, 2026.

only growing along with hotter and dryer environments, which leads to a breeding ground for increased fire incidents… The goal is not just to catch a fire when there are flames, but also to understand that there are situations where hot spots can be cooled before they flame. The goal is to set the tripwire as early in the process as possible. This can be done through top-grade thermal detection in combination with smoke, optical flame detection, and advanced data analytics—all coupled with a highly trained agent who is able to weed through false positives to fight only the incidents that need fighting… 2022 was (and 2023 is forecasted to be) the worst year for reported fire incidents …we are heading down a path where investments in solutions like the Fire Rover are considered 'critical' to successfully responding to the fire hazards that continue to hit our waste and recycling streams. We need a funding mechanism like the government or the battery manufacturers to help pay for the costs they have created... Investing in proper equipment for the fire department to use onsite can be a huge timesaver and lifesaver. Even going as far as having attached and rollout hoses so the firefighters can immediately start applying suppressant to the affected area can make a huge difference"
Source: Keys to Building a Successful MRF: Before, During, After - Waste Advantage Magazine)

Lastly, videos of lithium-ion battery caused fires are provided below for reference:

- https://youtu.be/8nz5ijXcckI?si=HqCA9p0OxftZ4KXK
- https://youtu.be/Vudxuqjscho?si=UspX6BmIM9rmeo5A
- Video: How quickly a battery fire can start - Inside Waste

2026_MaGIC_SB553_Lithium_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Lindsay Thompson
Position: FAV

Date: February 24, 2026

SB 553 - Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

MaGIC Position: **SUPPORT** Committee: EEE

The Maryland Green Industries Council respectfully submits this testimony in **support** of Senate Bill 553. Our member companies include landscape professionals, lawn care providers, arborists, and allied businesses. These businesses are facing increasing pressure to transition to electric lawn and landscape equipment powered by lithium-ion batteries. Ensuring the safe use, storage, transportation, and recycling of these batteries is therefore essential to both worker safety and public confidence in this technology.

SB 553 re-establishes the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland, directing it to study and recommend best practices to prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion battery fires, including those used in consumer and transportation applications and at recycling facilities. This comprehensive review is critical as electric outdoor power equipment becomes more common.

For the green industry, battery safety is not theoretical, it is operational. Crews routinely transport and charge multiple batteries daily in trucks, trailers, and maintenance facilities. While lithium-ion technology has advanced significantly, safe handling protocols, consistent charging standards, and clear end-of-life management guidance remain vital. The Commission's work to integrate federal regulations, emerging industry standards, and best practices will help ensure that contractors and homeowners alike use these products safely and responsibly.

Adoption of electric equipment by Maryland green industries businesses depends on confidence that battery systems are safe throughout their lifecycle. SB 553 directly addresses these concerns by examining reuse, recycling, and decommissioning of lithium-ion batteries and by improving public and first responder education.

The Green Industries Council also appreciates the bill's broad and balanced Commission membership, which includes fire safety experts, recycling professionals, insurance representatives, and industry stakeholders. We would welcome specific involvement from lawn, landscape and arborist professionals. This inclusive structure will ensure that recommendations reflect real-world conditions faced by contractors and equipment users, while also strengthening coordination with emergency responders and safety officials.

SB 553 provides the thoughtful, proactive framework needed to protect workers, businesses, and the public while supporting the responsible growth of electric lawn equipment technologies.

For these reasons, the Maryland Green Industries Council respectfully urges a **favorable report** on Senate Bill 553.

118 Dundee Ave ■ Chester, MD 21619 ■ Phone: 443-262-8491 ■ E-mail: lindsay.mdag@gmail.com

Frederick Area Landscape Contractors and Nurserymen ■ Landscape Contractors' Association, Inc. MD, DC, VA ■ Maryland Arborist Association ■ Maryland Association of Green Industries ■ Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association
Executive Director, Lindsay Thompson

SB0553 (HB0833) -FAV - Commission to Advance Lithi

Uploaded by: Megan Outten

Position: FAV

Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: SB 553 - Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment
DATE: February 24, 2026

MEA Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) respectfully submits this letter in support of Senate Bill 553.

Senate Bill 553 reestablishes the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland with an altered membership and mandate. The bill adds representatives from the Maryland Port Administration, the ocean freight shipping industry, the property casualty insurance industry, commercial insurance industry, and representatives from the Land and Materials Administration.

The Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety was established in 2024 to study and make recommendations regarding best practices and guidelines to prevent, detect, and suppress lithium-ion battery fires in utility applications. The Commission additionally provided education and training to better inform the public regarding lithium-ion battery safety.

As Maryland continues to advance its electrification goals, lithium-ion batteries have become increasingly critical to the State's clean energy transition. With the growth comes a corresponding need for renewed and expanded stakeholder engagement to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Evolving issues and challenges warranting further coordination include the safe collection, storage, and recycling of lithium-ion batteries; addressing perceived and real safety risks at the Port of Baltimore and across Maryland's roads, rails, and tunnels; and evaluating emerging third-party standards on battery technology.

Reestablishing this Commission will bring Maryland's stakeholders together to proactively examine these new and evolving questions and challenges. Doing so will help ensure that the continued usage of batteries in the clean energy transition occurs in a safe and well thought manner, using best practices, and incorporating lessons learned.

For these reasons, MEA urges the committee to issue a **favorable report.**

1800 Washington Blvd., Suite 755, Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 537-4000 | 1-800-72-ENERGY

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Megan Outten, Policy manager, at megan.outten@maryland.gov or 443.842.1780.

Testimony in support of SB0553 - Commission to Adv
Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz
Position: FAV

SB0553_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
02/24/2026
Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0553 – FAVORABLE

Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0553, Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland – Reestablishment

My daughter-in-law, a career firefighter, has discussed the problems first responders have with fires caused by lithium-ion batteries. The National Fire Protection Association discusses *Lithium-Ion Battery Safety* [1]

> Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly found in devices and systems that the public and first responders use or interact with daily. While these batteries provide an effective and efficient source of power, the likelihood of them overheating, catching on fire, and even leading to explosions increases when they are damaged or improperly used, charged, or stored.

Lithium-ion battery fires are a rapidly growing safety hazard in Maryland, with dozens of incidents reported annually involving e-bikes, scooters, and consumer electronics, particularly in Montgomery County. These fires often cause significant property damage (up to $500k+), injuries, and dangerous, toxic smoke. [2]

- **Rising Incidents:** A dedicated Maryland State Fire Marshal dasSBoard has tracked numerous incidents since April 2023,, with over 50+ reported statewide by late 2024.

The rise in incidents demands an accelerated response in Maryland to protect both our first responders and our residents. To accomplish that aim this bill will reestablish the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland with an altered membership and mandate; and requiring the Commission to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2027.

The report that will be required will assist the General Assembly in creation of legislation that will address the identified findings and recommendations.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0553.

[1] https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/home-fire-safety/lithium-ion-batteries
[2] Google AI Search "lithium-ion batteries fires in Maryland"

Letter of Support for SB0553.pdf
Uploaded by: S P
Position: FAV

MIKE MCKAY
Legislative District 1
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committees
Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Williamsport Office
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Williamsport Town Hall
Williamsport, Maryland

February 19, 2026

RE: Fire/EMS Coalition Support for SB0553

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

The Fire/EMS Coalition would like to express their support for **Senate Bill 553: Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment.** This bill will reestablish the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland with an altered membership and mandate.

The Fire/EMS Coalition supports Senate Bill 553.

Sincerely,

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

Voting Organizations:
Maryland Fire Chief's Association (MFCA)
Maryland State Firefighter's Association (MSFA)
State Fire Marshal (OSFM)
Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI)
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMMS)
Metro Fire Chief's Association
Professional Firefighters of Maryland

Our Mission Statement

The Maryland Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to offer support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.

SB 553-Commission to Advance Litium-Ion Battery Sa
Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield
Position: FWA

Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland
P.O Box 905 * Huntingtown, Maryland 20639
410-414-5406 * 1-800-244-0102 * Fax 410-414-5408

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Will Smith, Chair and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Vince Flook, President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland
Will Cain, 1st Vice President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

DATE: February 24, 2026

RE: **SB 553 Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland - Reestablishment**

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

The Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) SUPPORT SB 553 WITH AMENDMENTS. This bill reestablishes the Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland (Commission) to continue its research and review in several new areas.

Towing companies are on the front line providing a public service clearing and cleaning roadways when accidents occur. Their jobs can be dangerous and increasingly, so when an electric vehicle is involved. These vehicles do not have conventional transmission systems and must be towed in specific ways to avoid electrical issues, overheating, and damage to the battery pack. The batteries themselves also pose risks and must be handled in a certain manner with protective equipment.

The Commission's scope is being expanded to include the research and review of "Battery risks at the Port of Baltimore, roads, rail, and tunnels throughout Maryland." Considering the potential risks of towing electric vehicles in these areas, TRPM respectfully requests the bill be amended to add "ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TOWING AND RECOVERY PROFESSIONALS OF MARYLAND."

For these reasons, TRPM SUPPORTS SB 553 WITH AMENDMENTS and urges the Committee to add a TRPM representative to the Commission's membership.