



TESTIMONY FOR HB0517
Emission Standards, Ambient Air Quality Standards, and Solid Waste
Management - Local Authority

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Terrasa

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0517 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Everyone deserves to live in a clean environment – breathe clean air, drink clean water, and not worry about getting sick from toxins around them. Over the past several decades, many laws, both federal and state, were passed to reign in polluters and try to make our air quality better. Now, we are going in the opposite direction, and many businesses are taking advantage. Federal regulations are being weakened so that polluters will have even more free reign.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) can and often does institute regulations that are stricter than the Federal regulations. There are many local communities that want to protect their residents from pollution beyond current MDE regulation.

HB0517 is a legislative solution to the Federal court decision that overrode local government controls on stricter pollution regulations. This bill is to clarify that the legislature, through past legislation, indeed intended to allow local governments to protect their air quality with local laws at least as strict as the state. To protect our communities and to codify current Maryland Environmental laws, especially with the current Federal administration dismantling or not enforcing current EPA regulation, we need to act now.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.