

Dear Environment and Transportation Committee Members,

My name is Philip Ateto and I am a lifelong Marylander, currently residing in Annapolis, in Anne Arundel County. I am writing in support of HB0517 Emission Standards, Ambient Air Quality Standards, and Solid Waste Management - Local Authority

I support this bill because it will 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 can help communities defend themselves against polluters, especially when the state and federal governments aren't being strong environmental enforcers, as they should be.

Especially with the repeal of the EPA authority to regulate carbon and other emissions, Maryland residents need to be able to have more say in the quality of the air we breathe!

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.

This authority has been on the books for over 50 years and has not resulted in chaos with tons of conflicting local laws everywhere.

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.

For these reasons and for the future of our children, whom we claim to care so much about, I urge you to support this bill.