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TESTIMONY ON HB#0796- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Recycling - Prohibition on the Chemical Conversion of Plastic

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0796, Recycling - Prohibition on the Chemical Conversion of Plastic

Chemical conversion processes for plastics—[pyrolysis](#), [gasification](#), [methanolysis](#), and [enzymatic breakdown](#)—pose significant dangers, including the release of toxic air pollutants (dioxins, benzene, mercury) and generation of hazardous solid/liquid waste. These, often called "chemical recycling," primarily convert waste into fuel rather than new plastics, consuming high energy while risking environmental contamination and community health issues.¹

The Public Interest Research Group has reported on “*Chemical recycling*”: *What you need to know. - Chemical recycling is intended to convert plastic waste to fuel and new plastics. This is not a solution to the plastic waste crisis. It’s not really even recycling.*²

“Chemical recycling” – [sometimes called](#) “advanced recycling” by its proponents – is an [umbrella term for a set of technologies](#) that convert plastic waste either into fuel or raw materials for new plastics. The term covers [three broad types of technologies and processes](#):

1. Conversion - carried out via one of two main methods:

- Pyrolysis subjects plastic waste to extreme heat in the absence of oxygen to create a synthetic crude oil that can be refined into diesel fuel, gasoline and other products.
- Gasification uses extreme heat to convert plastic waste to synthesis gas: a fuel mixture mainly composed of hydrogen and carbon monoxide, which can then be turned into other fuels or chemicals, such as ethanol and methanol.

2. Decomposition

3. Purification

¹ Google AI Search “dangers of chemical conversion processes, pyrolysis, hydrolysis, methanolysis, gasification”

² <https://pirg.org/edfund/resources/chemical-recycling-what-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=Toxic%20emissions:%20Chemical%20recycling%20processes,of%20hazardous%20waste%20per%20month.>

This bill affects this change by altering the definition of recycling to exclude certain chemical conversion processes, pyrolysis, hydrolysis, methanolysis, gasification, enzymatic breakdown, or similar processes as determined by the Department of the Environment; and prohibiting a person from building in the State a facility that converts plastic to fuel or feedstock through a chemical conversion process.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#0796.