



**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: Environment and Transportation
Date: April 2, 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