



Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

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February 17, 2026

**BILL NUMBER: HOUSE BILL – 167 – FIRST READER**

**SHORT TITLE: GASOLINE-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS – PURCHASE AND USE - PROHIBITIONS**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION**

### **EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION**

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The bill prohibits the State from using gasoline-powered blowers beginning January 1, 2031. The Department notes and appreciates the extended equipment replacement timeline, which better accounts for the gradual replacement of equipment as it reaches the end of its serviceable life. The bill also includes exclusions for wildland fire suppression activities, prescribed burn management activities, firefighting activities performed by authorized personnel, and emergency response activities. These exclusions will allow the Department to continue addressing wildfires, prescribed burns, and other emergencies across the State with conventional gasoline-powered equipment.

To comply with the legislation, the Department would need to invest in battery-operated blowers to phase out existing gasoline-powered equipment in order to continue routine maintenance of State properties. Electric equipment traditionally has a higher up-front cost than gasoline-powered equipment, as reflected in the fiscal note.

The bill would also affect State contractors and subcontractors who will be required to eliminate all use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers by January 1, 2031. The potential impacts on the Department's contract costs are not reflected in the fiscal note as they are difficult to determine at this time.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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The Department maintains and operates over 500,000 acres of public lands across the state as 225 units managed primarily within the State Park System, State Forest System, Wildlife Management Areas, and Fisheries Management Areas. The groundskeeping and trail maintenance tasks associated with management of these lands for public use requires a sizable inventory of fossil fuel-powered lawn and garden equipment, including numerous leaf blowers meeting the definition above.

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## **BILL EXPLANATION**

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This bill's purpose is to prohibit the State from purchasing hand-held, backpack, or walk-behind gasoline-powered leaf or grass blowers, vacuums, and leaf removal devices (including those connected to a generator powered by gasoline or other fossil fuels) beginning July 1, 2026, and fully eliminate the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers on State-owned land by January 1, 2031. It also requires each agency of the Executive Branch of State government to monitor and enforce that agency's compliance with the provisions of this subtitle. The bill includes exemptions for wildland fire suppression activities, prescribed burn management activities, fire fighting activities carried out by authorized personnel, and emergency response activities to clear surfaces following a crash. The bill also exempts stationary or tow-behind leaf vacuums, mulchers, debris loader devices, and snow blowers. And lastly, the bill requires the State and its contractors to comply with any local government standards that are at least as stringent as the standards established in this subtitle when managing state property.