



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB11
Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2022
Testimony by Delegate Vaughn Stewart
March 4, 2022 • Economic Matters Committee

What the Bill Does

The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2022 (HB11) would alter the energy sources that the state includes in the renewable energy portfolio standard (RPS) program. Sources that produce greenhouse gasses would be removed from the state's RPS program, meaning that energy suppliers would not be able to use these energy sources to meet their renewable energy requirements.

This bill will remove energy derived from qualifying biomass, methane from the anaerobic decomposition of organic materials, certain fuel cells, poultry litter-to-energy, waste-to-energy, thermal energy from a thermal biomass system, and refuse-derived fuel from the RPS.

Why the Bill Is Important

Including dirty energy sources in the RPS harms ratepayers, impedes job growth, causes sickness, and pollutes the state. Maryland's ratepayers spend about \$30 million annually to buy renewable energy credits (RECs) from dirty energy sources. Moreover, these dirty energy sources are overwhelmingly located outside the state—we are funding trash incinerators in Virginia and anaerobic digesters in Delaware at the expense of wind and solar jobs in Maryland.

These dirty energy sources also present significant human health and environmental risks. Our RPS is littered with dirty energy; in fact, waste-to-energy was the second most abundant Tier 1 energy source used in 2020 to meet RPS requirements.¹ In 2020, more than a third of renewable energy credits (RECs) came from dirty sources.² Rather than fulfilling its mission to transition the state to genuinely renewable energy, the RPS is bogged down by polluting fuel sources.

¹ Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard. Public Service Commission of Maryland. November, 2021. https://www.psc.state.md.us/wp-content/uploads/CY20-RPS-Annual-Report_Final.pdf

² Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard. Public Service Commission of Maryland. November, 2021.

Dirty energy sources pose disproportionate impacts of communities of color, which are often chosen as sites for polluting facilities. For example, the state's two trash incinerators release a dangerous set of compounds called dioxins, which the World Health Organization has identified as a human carcinogen. Dioxins are also linked to diseases of the immune system, endocrine system, nervous system, and reproductive system. Air pollutants from waste incinerators also increase the risk of pre-term births and certain types of cancer.

Why the Committee Should Vote Favorably

Subsidizing dirty energy sources is a sweetheart deal for a handful of industries, mostly located out of state. But it's a boondoggle for Marylanders, who are stuck paying higher utility bills for fewer jobs and more pollution. Reserving Tier 1 subsidies for legitimately clean energy will create new jobs and mitigate climate change.

I urge a favorable report.