



HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland

**Testimony on HB0011
Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2022**

Hearing Date: March 4, 2022

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Stewart

Committee: House Economics Matters Committees

Submitting: Ruth White for Howard County Climate Action

Position: Favorable

[HoCo Climate Action](#) is a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing more than 1,450 subscribers, and a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#).

Howard County Climate Action enthusiastically supports HB0011 - Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2022. This bill reforms the current Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and removes from its Tier 1 category all sources of energy that are not truly carbon-free energies. Subsidies for energy sources that increase our greenhouse gas emissions, especially via methane emissions, do not belong in a renewable energy standard.

The IPCC report released this week said bleakly that humanity cannot avoid climate crisis suffering, but we can make it worse, leading to more disease, death and frequent, costly disasters. We are past the point where we can afford to incentivize all of the above energy sources. We must focus our subsidies and incentives on truly clean energies.

About 38 states and DC have an RPS and the purpose is to prioritize the use of clean renewable energy in generating electricity. Maryland's RPS law dates from 2004 and has been revised frequently since. Although the focus should be to increase cleaner sources of electricity, Maryland's code currently allows many sources of energy that have significant CO2 and methane emissions contributing to the climate crisis. We have heard Maryland has an unusual number of dirty energy sources compared to most states.

Beyond the climate polluting gases, many dirty energy sources produce a host of other toxic gases and pollutants. Incineration is the most notorious dirty energy offender. But others include poultry litter(manure)-to-energy, woody biomass incineration, methane from anaerobic digestion, and landfill-gas-to-energy. Some claim these industries are necessary for waste processing, but often there are better waste or zero waste alternatives. But one of the worst impacts is that dirty energy subsidies impede the incentivizing of truly greenhouse gas-free renewable energies. Finally, they rob ratepayers of money they think is going to increase non-polluting truly clean energy. And much of their hard earned money is going out of state. These dirty energy sources are overwhelmingly located outside of Maryland, meaning that Maryland ratepayers' money is flowing out of state - \$108 million to dirty energy sources since 2008 in Virginia alone, robbing Maryland of clean energy jobs.

We urge a FAVORABLE vote for HB11 so that RPS Tier 1 dollars can go toward supporting wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal power - not greenhouse gas emissions.

Howard County Climate Action

Submitted by Ruth White and Liz Feighner, Steering and Advocacy Committee

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