



Testimony for HB0011: Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Tier 1 Renewable Source – Alterations(Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2022)

Bill Sponsors: Delegate Stewart

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Greater Baltimore Democratic Socialists of America

Person Submitting: Matthew Lewis

Position: FAVORABLE

The Greater Baltimore Democratic Socialists of America support significant reforms to improve the air Marylanders breathe, the water we drink, and other environmental conditions that promote prosperity for all. We believe that now is the time to remove greenhouse gas emitting sources from the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and to commit to emission-free renewable energy within Maryland.

In 2020, dirty, greenhouse gas emitting sources made up nearly 35% of Maryland's "clean energy" under the state's Tier 1 RPS. After the removal of black liquor as an eligible source in 2021, the remaining dirty sources still make up nearly a quarter of Tier 1 Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). Burning trash, chicken litter, and woody biomass, the manufacturing of methane from anaerobic digestion and capturing it from landfills all contribute to climate change, pollute the environment, worsen air quality, and harm nearby communities, most often low-income communities of color. To add insult to injury, many of these facilities are located outside of Maryland, and RECs amount to a transfer of wealth from ratepayers to out of state polluters all based in a program that claims to be supporting renewable energy in Maryland. Along with transferring wealth out of state, the RPS is not helping develop renewable energy in Maryland and is undermining the state's clean energy goals. In fact, the emissions from dirty sources in the RPS overwhelm emission reductions from truly renewable energy. In its 2019 report reviewing the RPS in response to 2017's HB1414, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources found that the state's RPS "has played a small role" in emissions reductions and had nothing to do with most the of the reductions in CO₂ emissions we have seen in the past two decades. In the same report mentioned above it was also found that the pollution from combustion-based energy sources included in the RPS is so great that Maryland RPS energy

sources, on average, pollute as much or more SO₂ and NO_x than the grid as a whole – pollutants that significantly contribute to asthma and other respiratory illnesses. The status quo is a bad deal for Maryland.

How can we make the RPS work for Maryland citizens? To start we must remove greenhouse gas emitting sources from the RPS. Maryland ratepayers paid over \$30 million to buy RECs from facilities that emit greenhouse gases in 2020, and over \$246 million since 2008. Every REC that subsidizes pollution and climate change is a REC that should instead be redirected to clean energy sources, stimulating demand for new projects and creating well-paying jobs in the clean energy sector. Time is not on our side, and we need aggressive state action to avert the worst of global climate change. We can no longer support the false solutions found in Maryland's RPS. **For these reasons, we urge you to reclaim renewable energy and support HB0011.**