



HB161 – Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act

Testimony before House Environment & Transportation Committee

February 8, 2023

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Crystal Konny, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB161**, the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Korman for sponsoring this important legislation.

This legislation tasks the Department of Legislative Services with evaluating the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority, which was set up in 1980 to plan and finance solid waste management systems for its member jurisdictions which includes Howard County, where our members reside. The State Transparency and Accountability Review Commission in 2021 recommended that every quasi-governmental agency receive periodic reviews at least every eight years, which has not been done in this case and is basic good governance.

Some business conducted by the Waste Disposal Authority is duplicative of other quasi-governmental agencies. Once such agency, the Maryland Environmental Service, was recently reformed to improve operations, transparency, and accountability, and is now required to report to the legislature on its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions annually, something the Waste Disposal Authority is not required to do. Given the large impact that solid waste management techniques have on the environment, it makes sense to have measures like that in place. Since we do not want to see any new trash incinerators built in Maryland, it makes sense for the state to evaluate this agency and carefully consider what are the right steps for its future.

For all of these reasons, please pass the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority Sunset Act, so that the Department of Legislative Services may conduct this valuable review and the legislature can consider its findings in 2025.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.

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