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Written Testimony
House Bill 166 – Reclaim Renewable Energy Act
Economic Matters Committee – March 7, 2024
Support

Background: House Bill 166 would alter the definition of a "Tier 1 renewable source" to exclude energy derived from waste and refuse from being eligible for inclusion in the renewable energy portfolio standard moving forward.

Written Comments: The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world. One of these entities is The Pearlstone Center in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices.

Trash incineration is a very polluting method of producing electricity. A new 2023 study in PLOS Climate found that “incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than any other power source” - including coal plants. Maryland needs to show its residents that they are a priority, by funding renewable energy development that shows we are taking the climate and public health crises in our state seriously.

This legislation is an important tool to support clean, renewable energy development and decrease emissions from the electricity sector. By tightening the belt and choosing to no longer subsidize trash incineration as a form of renewable energy, you will show your commitment to public health; protect taxpayer dollars; and improve the trajectory of the impact on our environment.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Council asks for a favorable report on HB166.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.