



Testimony On: HB 166 “Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations” (Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024)

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Support

Date: March 7, 2024

Honorable Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record. On behalf of Zero Waste Montgomery County, we strongly SUPPORT H.B. 166 - The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024.

In a time when we must make many investments in clean energy and other programs across sectors to fight climate change, this bill provides our state with a budget-neutral opportunity to refocus existing clean energy subsidies toward renewable energy investment that is needed most - emissions-free technologies like solar and wind. The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2024 accomplishes this by removing trash incineration from the state’s Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Removing incineration from the Renewable Portfolio Standard has been supported by Montgomery County officials because it creates the right incentives to achieve progress toward our county climate and clean energy goals. Removing incineration credits strengthens our state’s renewable energy portfolio and brings it into alignment with the recommendations in Maryland’s recently released Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and the Maryland Commission on Climate Change 2023 Annual Report.

The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) was established to support and incentivize clean, renewable energy generators. Maryland’s incineration renewable energy credits go to facilities – like ours in Montgomery County – that existed before the renewable portfolio standard was created and that don’t need the state subsidy. Maryland’s incineration renewable energy credits even flow out of state to support a trash incinerator in Virginia. Clean energy subsidies supported by ratepayers across the state of Maryland should be used for real, clean, renewable energy that will fight climate change, make progress toward cleaning Maryland’s air, and align our incentives with our policy goals. Continuing to spend Marylanders’ money on climate-polluting facilities in our county or out of state that do not need subsidies to operate harms Maryland ratepayers when our goals would be better met by supporting newer, clean, emissions-free energy sources.

This legislation would:

- End Maryland renewable energy subsidies for trash incinerators -- including one that operates in Virginia.

- End Maryland renewable energy subsidies for Montgomery County's largest stationary source of CO2 emissions.
- Help us meet Maryland and Montgomery County's goals for clean, renewable, emissions-free energy.

Please pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act now.