



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the
Economic Matters Committee
on
House Bill 166
March 7, 2024
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak about wise stewardship of the gift of creation. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community with three judicatories located in every part of our State.

The ELCA identified greenhouse gases as environmental pollutants because of their deleterious effects on climate in 1993 ("Caring for Creation," ELCA). We have supported a swift transition to an energy production regime sourced from renewables, in Maryland and in other states.

While biomasses are regular byproducts of several agricultural and natural resource industries, and thus renewable in some measure, they still generate greenhouse gas when burned. Burning them, while "renewable" in that expanded definition, still frustrates the effort to reduce carbon emissions.

Abundantly recurring material such as packaging wastes rescued from trash and burned to produce "energy" eludes any current definition of "renewable" excepting that they are and will remain plentiful. Burning trash was never going to produce "clean energy".

After some twenty years it's time to clean up Maryland's renewable energy portfolio. We therefore support **House Bill 166** and implore your favorable report.

Lee Hudson