

HB166/SB146

Reclaim Renewable Energy Act

*We're in a climate crisis.
We're in a budget shortfall.*

*So why are we wasting
\$25 million a year subsidizing
trash incinerators instead of
renewable energy?*



Maryland created the Renewable Portfolio Standard to increase the amount of renewable energy on the grid, to deliver long-term decreased emissions and a healthier environment. Utilities subsidize renewable energy through this program increasingly over time.

Trash incineration is among the dirtiest ways to produce electricity. Incinerators emit more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity produced than any other power source, even coal plants. Incinerators emit mercury and lead into the air nearby communities breathe, which are not safe for human exposure at any level.

Subsidizing trash incineration isn't getting Maryland electricity that delivers decreased greenhouse gas emissions or a healthier environment. But **Maryland is wasting a lot of money profiting trash incinerators**, because right now, trash incineration counts as "renewable" in the RPS.

*We're wasting more
and more money
over time subsidizing
trash incineration:*

2020: \$11.5 million

2021: \$14.9 million

2022: \$24.7 million

*We're wasting a lot of that money
out of state. In 2022, we spent:*

\$4.2 million on the
incinerator in Baltimore City

**\$8.7 million on the incinerator
in Montgomery County**

**\$11.7 million on the incinerator
in Lorton, Virginia**

*We need to start spending that money on REAL
renewable energy to fight the climate crisis instead.*

What's the solution?

HB166/SB146, the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act, deletes trash incineration from the list of “renewable energy” sources that qualify for Maryland’s RPS. This will open up more space in Maryland’s RPS for supporting the emissions-free electricity Maryland actually needs to fight climate change.

Maryland needs to invest in climate solutions, and finding funding for the \$1 billion per year that MDE’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan calls for will be a significant challenge. The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act redistributes the subsidy that Maryland utilities, and by extension Maryland ratepayers, are already paying. It will make more money available to support real renewable energy **at no cost to the state budget**.

This solution is endorsed by:

Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan

“This plan calls for the definitions of qualifying resources in the RPS program to align with definitions of clean power resources under the forthcoming Clean Power Standard, including the elimination of eligibility for municipal solid waste incineration. Legislation will be needed to change the RPS definitions, which are set in the state’s statute.” (page 21)

List of recommended legislative actions, #2:
“Modify the Renewable Portfolio Standard — In consultation with MDE and MEA, pass legislation to modify the definitions of qualifying resources in the RPS to align with definitions of clean power resources under the forthcoming Clean Power Standard.”

The Maryland Commission on Climate Change’s 2023 Annual Report

Mitigation Working Group Recommendation #18:
“Due to the energy source’s contributions to the state’s GHG emissions, the General Assembly should adopt legislation to remove municipal solid waste incineration as an eligible generating source from the RPS.”

More than 80 Maryland climate, environment, environmental justice, clean energy, and community organizations.

More money for renewable energy.

No money out of the state budget.

Pass the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act.



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