

2024 Maryland Legislative Report



VICTORIES



PASSED: Disclosure near Superfund Sites (HB486/SB125)

- The Superfund National Priorities List identifies the most hazardous contaminated sites in the country. Contamination from these sites can travel through the air, water, soil, and groundwater to nearby land, threatening neighbors' health.
- Preventative measures, like specific home maintenance, equipment, and changed behaviors, can reduce that risk — but only if neighbors know it's necessary.
- **HB486/SB125 ensures that people buying homes near a Superfund NPL site receive a disclosure notice**, information about the site, and a 5-day right of rescission.
- This great bipartisan bill passed both chambers with overwhelming majorities.



DEFEATED: Fighting for real environmental justice (HB24/SB96)

- We opposed HB24/SB96 in solidarity with our partners in the Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition, a coalition of grassroots organizations and legal and policy experts.
- Proponents, including the Maryland Department of the Environment, described HB24 as an environmental justice bill, but it ignored the needs of Maryland's most polluted communities, failing to address almost all air pollution permits.
- **This legislation would have wasted the state's precious environmental justice resources** and would have set a precedent of blatantly ignoring the most polluted communities in the state and calling it "environmental justice."
- HB24 passed in the House, but it was never brought to a vote in the Senate.



DEFEATED: Fighting against state preemption on energy siting (HB1407)

- **We opposed HB1407, dangerous legislation that would have prohibited local governments from regulating or prohibiting Tier 1 renewable energy sources.**
- Since the Tier 1 category includes trash incinerators, "biogas" facilities, and woody biomass burners, that would promote these health-harming pollutants and eliminate local governments' ability to regulate them.
- This would also be bad policy on wind, solar, and geothermal energy siting too, cutting off the thoughtful planning that's necessary for siting and promoting these energy sources in their optimal locations.
- When the bill was voted out of committee, we sprang into action and immediately pushed back, alongside allies in the environmental movement and in local governments. The bill was taken off the House's vote list the next morning and it never moved forward.

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DEFEATS



Reclaiming Renewable Energy (HB166/SB146)

- Maryland wastes *a lot* of money — \$25 million in 2022 — subsidizing trash incineration as “renewable.” If trash incineration were no longer classified as “renewable,” that money would go to subsidize real renewable energy instead.
- Maryland’s climate plan, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, local governments, and about 100 organizations across the state of Maryland all support ending state “renewable energy” subsidies for trash incineration. The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act would have done just that.
- **If the bill had been scheduled for a vote, it had the votes to pass. But Senate President Ferguson and Speaker Jones chose for HB166/SB146 not to come to a vote, and Governor Moore failed to support the bill.**



Funding Local Septic Systems (HB1320)

- This bill would have made it easier to use Bay Restoration Fund money to support more septic system repairs and replacements, important for addressing local water quality and public health concerns from failing and polluting septic systems.
- **The bill was not brought to a vote this year.** We will continue to work with the State to find a path forward to better fund septic system upgrades and repairs, and better protect all Maryland waterways from nitrogen pollution.



Funding Waste Diversion & Compost (HB1318)

- Local businesses, nonprofits, community groups, and governments all tell us: Zero Waste infrastructure needs state funding.
- This bill would have created grant programs to support food waste rescue, diversion, and composting, and funded these programs through a \$2 per ton surcharge on dumping trash at a landfill or incinerator — a smart “polluter pays” concept.
- **The House passed this bill, but stripped out the funding mechanism, only creating the structure of the grant program; the Senate then did not pass this unfunded grant program.** Outside of legislative session, we will continue to work with partners to determine how the state could fund investments in food waste rescue, diversion, and composting.



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