



Climate & Energy Solutions for Maryland: We Need CLEAN Renewable Energy



- Maryland needs to transition from polluting energy sources based on combustion to clean renewable energy like wind and solar.
- Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) has helped launch the growing solar and wind industries in Maryland, but the policy also provides incentives to some combustion technologies, including trash incineration, paper mill waste, and chicken manure.
- The RPS should no longer incentivize these combustion sources that pollute the air, emit greenhouse gases thus contributing to global warming, and clog the path to more clean energy.
- In 2016, Maryland should commit to a clean, renewable energy future. The state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) should be updated so that it only provides financial incentives for clean energy (like wind and solar).
- Additionally, the RPS should be updated to increase the state's renewable energy goal to 25% by 2020. This alone will result in Maryland obtaining more of its energy from clean sources like wind and solar.

Let's Make 2016 a Turning Point in Maryland for Fighting Climate Change

In Maryland, “renewable” energy is not always clean energy.

Today, over half of Maryland’s renewable energy is produced by combustion (burning black liquor, trash, wood, poultry manure, and landfill gas). These energy sources release carbon dioxide and other pollutants into our atmosphere, harming our climate and our citizens’ health. For example:

- **Black liquor** incineration produces sulfur dioxide, arsenic, and lead at levels as high as fossil fuels.
- **Trash incinerators** emit more dioxin, mercury, nitrogen oxide, lead, and carbon dioxide than fossil fuel plants. We need to get better at solving our trash problems through recycling, composting, and waste reduction.
- **Woody biomass incinerators** produce energy not only from waste wood but also from whole trees and forests. This turns a carbon sink into a carbon emitter. Obtaining just 4% of our electricity from burning trees would use up 70% of our nation’s entire timber harvest.

CLEAN ENERGY is good for our health

Currently, 85% of Marylanders live in areas that don’t meet federal air quality standards. 20% of Baltimore children have asthma; that’s twice the national average. Solar and wind produce electricity without adding any air pollution.

... good for our economy

The Maryland solar industry already employs over 2000 people across 30 companies. Shifting RPS incentives to clean sources could create 1,000 megawatts of new capacity and as many as 4,000 jobs in our region.

... and is increasingly affordable

Average solar prices have fallen 63% since 2010 as U.S. installations have increased by 600%. Wholesale wind now costs only 2.35 cents a kilowatt, the lowest it has ever been. And utility scale solar projects are now below the cost of coal and gas in dollars per megawatt hour.

For more information or to volunteer, contact us:

David Smedick: david.smedick@sierraclub.org

Mark Posner: mark.posner@mdsierra.org

Web - <http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/legislation>

General email - Legislation@MDSierra.org