



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

February 20, 2014

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Members of the Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support: *House Bill 931 – Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Thermal Energy*

Dear Delegate Davis and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed House Bill 931 and would like to express its support for this legislation. MDE was a member of the Thermal Energy Task Force that met over the course of the last year. The task force made recommendations on restructuring the renewable portfolio standard to include, among other things, a requirement for electricity suppliers to secure renewable energy credits generated by thermal renewable energy sources. Such sources would constitute a category in the portfolio separate from sources that generate electricity.

Overall, the Department supports the recommendations of the task force. More specifically, from the Department's perspective, creating a separate standard for thermal renewable energy helps improve the likelihood that such sources will be built in Maryland. This is of interest to the Department because the use of animal manure biomass systems, a Tier I thermal renewable energy source, would provide farmers a means to better manage their excess nutrients, which would assist in meeting nutrient management goals for the Chesapeake Bay and within local watersheds. In addition, the use of woody biomass systems, also a Tier I thermal renewable energy source, could supplant the use of fuels that have a higher carbon footprint, which is supportive of the Department's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.

Thank you for your consideration of this information as you review HB 931. Please contact me at 410-260-6301 or by email at jeffery.fretwell@maryland.gov if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Jeffery Fretwell

Cc: George (Tad) S. Aburn, Jr., Director, Air and Radiation Management Administration
Heather Barthel, Director, Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

