



April 25, 2010

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor
State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 690

Dear Governor O'Malley:

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) is writing you to express its support for Senate Bill 690 (Renewable Energy Portfolio – Waste-to-Energy and Refuse-Derived Fuel) and urges you to sign the bill into law.

Waste-to-energy and refuse-derived fuel can play a critical role in helping the State increase its renewable energy options. There is no single energy source or “best technology” that will enable the State to reach its renewable energy goals. Instead, the State has recognized that it must utilize a broad array of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass in order to reach its 20% Tier 1 renewable source goal in 2022.

With an estimated 257 megawatts of generation capacity, Maryland's three existing waste-to-energy facilities can help the State meet its renewable source goal if they are moved from Tier 2 to Tier 1 under SB 690. It will give the State one more option to help reach its goal. More options also mean that electricity suppliers may be able to meet their portfolio standard requirements more easily, translating into potentially lower electricity costs.

Waste-to-energy plants can have a net positive environmental impact. Assertions that they will reduce county recycling rates have not been borne out. The sole county-run plant in the State is located in Montgomery County, which continues to have one of the State's highest recycling rates.

In conclusion, no single renewable energy source represents a “magic bullet” to Maryland's energy challenges. Only by relying on a broad array of environmentally-friendly energy sources can the State meet its goals. SB 690 provides yet another option. For this reason, MACo urges you to sign SB 690. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Sanderson", is written over a white background.

Michael Sanderson
Executive Director