



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Delegate, Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building Room 231
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB 561, Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Wastewater, Thermal, and Other Renewable Sources

Dear Delegate Davis:

On behalf of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) and the Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), we are writing to offer our support for your bill, HB 561, Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Wastewater, Thermal, and Other Renewable Sources. As the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington, COG supports efforts in the region to meet our medium and long-term climate change goals, which aligns with our 2021 Legislative Priorities.

Currently, Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards (RPS) recognizes various sources of renewable thermal energy which include ground-source heat pumps and geothermal however, the RPS is ambiguous regarding the eligibility when used to produce thermal energy. The District of Columbia's RPS recognizes wastewater thermal energy as a Tier 1 energy source. DC Water is currently using wastewater thermal energy at three facilities, including the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant. Expanding Tier 1 renewable sources to include wastewater thermal energy would allow the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and other Maryland utilities to use this energy source in a closed loop. The bill's passage may lower the utility's operating and maintenance costs, a savings that could be passed on to rate payers. The bill would also assist Maryland's efforts to get to 50 percent renewable energy by 2030 and assist the region in meeting our climate goals.

Please contact Jeffrey King, COG's Chief of Energy and Climate Programs at (202) 962-3238 or jking@mwkog.org and Steven Bieber, COG's Water Resources Program Director at (202) 962-3219 or sbieber@mwkog.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Deni Taveras in black ink.

Deni Taveras
Chair, Climate, Energy, and Environment
Policy Committee
Prince George's County

Handwritten signature of Laurie-Anne Sayles in black ink.

Laurie-Anne Sayles
Chair, Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources
Policy Committee
City of Gaithersburg