



# City of Baltimore

City Council  
City Hall, Room 408  
100 North Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

## Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY\*

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL        R  
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilman Curran

### A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

**In Support of State Action - Maryland Clean Energy Advancement Act of 2015**

FOR the purpose of supporting the enactment of The Maryland Clean Energy Advancement Act (H.B 377/S.B 373) by the 2015 General Assembly, and calling on the General Assembly to enact, and the Governor to sign, legislation to protect Maryland's environment, health, and economy by accelerating the transition away from fossil-fuels and towards renewables for energy generation.

### Recitals

The Maryland Clean Energy Advancement Act (H.B 377/S.B 373) would double the amount of renewable energy consumed by Maryland residents by increasing the current goal of having a 20% Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by 2022 to a goal of 25% by 2020 and then 40% by 2025. This would have significant positive impacts on Maryland's environment, health, and economy that would resonate especially strongly in Baltimore.

As a coastal city, Baltimore should be especially concerned that Maryland is the 3rd most vulnerable state in America to sea level rise driven by climate change. Yet, over half of Maryland's electricity still comes from carbon-spewing fossil fuels — coal, oil, and natural gas. With so much to lose from global warming, Maryland needs to do everything in its power to slow or reverse this serious threat, and one of the best ways Maryland can step up against climate change is by decreasing this reliance on carbon fueled power plants.

Any reduction in fossil-fuel use will also reduce harmful emissions into our air that endanger the health of many Marylanders and Baltimoreans. Maryland has the worst air quality on the east coast, and Baltimore has the highest emissions related mortality rate in the state, with an estimated 113 deaths per year from air pollution. Another 65,227 adults suffer from asthma in Baltimore City, a condition linked to air pollution.

Altogether, 85% of Marylanders live in areas that fail to meet the EPA's national clean air standard; and the burden of our current reliance on fossil fuels falls even harder on Maryland's poorest communities. Nationally, approximately 68% of African Americans live within 30 miles of a coal-fired power plant. In Maryland, 94% of African Americans and 95% of Hispanic or Latino residents live in counties that fail to meet the nation's clean air standards. That inequality is reflected in poor health outcomes. Communities of color breathe in nearly 40% more polluted air than whites, and poor white Americans endure 27% heavier pollution than do wealthy white Americans.

A focus on increasing the use of renewable energy can alleviate these environmental and health concerns while simultaneously boosting Maryland's economy. There are few sectors in Maryland's economy that are more promising than the clean energy sector in terms of jobs and growth, says Maryland Senator Brian Feldman (D-Montgomery), a chief sponsor of the Maryland Clean Energy Advancement Act of 2015. Solar is bigger than the crab industry now in this state. This legislation helps expand that prosperity with a sound policy that creates investment certainty for businesses and consumers.

Maryland is one of the top solar states in the country. With nearly 150 companies and over 3,000 jobs in Maryland today, the state's solar industry already occupies an important place in our economy, and there is plenty of room to grow. Maryland currently gets a mere 0.35% of its electricity from solar energy, but Federal statistics show that Maryland could power itself 10 times over by developing all of its available rooftop, urban, and rural space. If Maryland's carveout for solar were doubled from its current level of 2% to 4%, it is anticipated, based on the U.S. Department of Energy's Jobs and Economic Development Indicator, that this legislation would incentivize roughly 930 megawatts of new Maryland solar energy while supporting nearly 1,600 new Maryland jobs per year, most of which would have an average wage of over \$24/hour.

Wind power in our region could also stimulate a statewide resurgence of manufacturing and construction jobs. A 40% clean electricity standard would create incentives for almost 4,200 MW of new land-based wind energy, supporting roughly 18,000 direct jobs throughout the wind supply chain in our region. And that's before counting indirect and induced job potential.

States with the best clean electricity standards are the states that create the most clean energy jobs, says Bob Keefe, Executive Director of Environmental Entrepreneurs, a firm which represents innovative business leaders. These are jobs that pay better than average and can't be offshored and are helping both our economy and our environment. Maryland is rife with opportunities for more renewable energy, and there's no reason places like Massachusetts and New Jersey and North Carolina should be outpacing Maryland in solar and other areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council supports the enactment of The Maryland Clean Energy Advancement Act (H.B 377/S.B 373) by the 2015 General Assembly, and calls on the General Assembly to enact, and the Governor to sign, legislation to protect Maryland's environment, health, and economy by accelerating the transition away from fossil-fuels and towards renewables for energy generation.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the Maryland

General Assembly, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House Speaker, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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