



**SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSULTANTS**

April 28, 2011

The Honorable Martin O'Malley  
Office of the Governor  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

RE: Please sign HB 1121/SB.690

Dear Governor O'Malley:

As a consultant for more than 35 years in the solid waste industry, I read with concern the news report that environmental groups are urging you to veto HB 1121/SB 690, which would recognize waste-to-energy as part of Maryland's long-term renewable energy portfolio, allowing energy providers to use waste-to-energy power to meet part of their annual renewable energy goals ("O'Malley urged to veto Md. trash bill," April 27, 2011, Metro, B1). A veto of this legislation would set Maryland on a course that ignores the role of waste-to-energy as a proven source of renewable energy. Waste-to-energy has and can continue to play a significant role in the state's waste management needs. Currently, approximately 15 percent of Maryland's trash is disposed at the state's three waste-to-energy facilities, generating approximately 17 percent of the total renewable energy generated in the state. BRESCO, a 2,250 tons-per-day (TPD) waste-to-energy facility in the City of Baltimore, has reliably provided steam and heat to downtown buildings and electricity to the grid since the 1980s.

In my company's work with hundreds of communities throughout the United States, I have seen what can happen when well-meaning environmental groups oppose waste-to-energy as part of a community's solid waste management system. Communities that yield to the opposition often end up hauling waste to distant landfills or sending their waste to waste-to-energy facilities in other communities. In the process, they spend more on disposal, contribute to greenhouse gases, and deprive themselves of a source of homegrown renewable energy that provides steam, electricity and new revenues sources.

Throughout the country, there is a resurgence of interest in waste-to-energy. Recent years have seen expansions of facilities in Hillsborough County, Fla.; Lee County, Fla.; Honolulu, Hi.; and Olmstead County, Minn. Earlier this month, Palm Beach County, Fla., awarded two contracts to build a 3,000 TPD waste-to-energy facility that will be the largest renewable energy facility in Florida and generate approximately 75 megawatts of electricity. In Maryland, Frederick County has realized that hauling its waste out of state is not a long-term, economically reliable solution and now plans to build a waste-to-energy facility that will produce enough electricity to provide power to 45,000 homes, offsetting 130,000 tons of coal or 500,000 barrels of oil a year.

Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc.

8550 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 304  
Fairfax, Virginia 22031-4620

Phone: 703-573-5800 Toll Free: 800-573-5801 Fax: 703-698-1306

[www.gbbinc.com](http://www.gbbinc.com)

Printed on recycled paper

The Honorable Martin O'Malley

April 28, 2011

Page 2

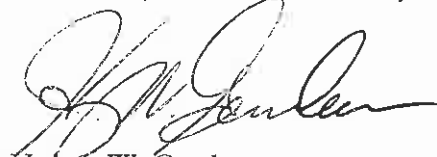
What is prompting the renewed interest in waste-to-energy? First, because waste-to-energy reduces the volume of municipal solid waste by 90%, communities are able to use their landfills about 10 times longer – or they no longer need to haul tons of waste to out-of-county landfills. Second, because this waste processing technology produces power, energy sales help offset operations and maintenance expenses. With most expenses fixed, a waste-to-energy facility promotes long-term stabilization of waste disposal costs.

There is a common misperception that waste-to-energy is not compatible with recycling and pollutes the air. In fact, there is clear evidence that communities with waste-to-energy facilities have recycling rates at least 5 percentage points above the national average of 34%. Montgomery County, Md., with a recycling rate of 44% and a waste-to-energy facility, is a perfect example. Today's waste-to-energy facilities have sophisticated air quality monitoring systems and state-of-the-art scrubbers and filters that capture toxic emissions. The builder of the Frederick County facility, for example, guarantees that emissions will be well below emissions standards for both the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the European Union, where waste-to-energy is a well established element of solid waste management strategies.

There is no doubt that sustainable recycling should be a leading element in any local solid waste strategy and system. However, there is a role for waste-to-energy as a disposal method for waste that cannot be recycled. This technology is now considered mature and proven. At a time when energy prices are dramatically rising, it would be a mistake not to recognize waste-to-energy as a clean, renewable, safe and economical source of energy.

Sincerely,

Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc.



Harvey W. Gershman  
President

Enclosure

Home Address:  
5404 Linden Court  
Bethesda, MD 20814

PS: GBB is a Maryland corporation.