

Sunrise Movement Howard County

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0803– *Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act*

Dear Chairwoman McIntosh and Members of the Committee,

Sunrise Movement Howard County supports HB803, the Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act of 2021.

Our Sunrise hub is made up of youth activists, primarily high school and college students. We are fighting for climate justice within our communities. Universities are very important in our lives as we continue seeking higher education, and we want to see these institutions leading the transition to green infrastructure. Universities educate the young minds who will lead the growth of green innovation and as such, we want to see universities lead our society in *using* this green innovation.

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to our planet and the lives of our youth. Youth are leaders in the climate movement for a reason, as the world we stand to inherit faces irreparable damage. We must act swiftly and decisively to protect and restore our climate, so we can ensure a liveable future. We have a lot at stake here in Maryland when it comes to climate change, so the consequences of inaction will fall onto the shoulders of our youth.

Institutions of higher education have played a huge role in Maryland and around the world as beacons of research and societal progress. Public universities have a responsibility to protect, educate, and support citizens of the state and to lead their institution to support these principles. However, these public institutions have massive carbon footprints due to their high-tech research facilities, energy needs, and commuter emissions powered by fossil fuels. Youth are utilizing their agency to remind public research institutions of their guiding principles. This legislation will ensure that universities will lead the way in carbon neutrality, secure co-benefits for the State, and address climate change while addressing climate justice.

This bill makes Maryland Public Universities leaders of sustainability and climate justice by:

- Reducing scope one and scope two carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and scope three induced emissions by 2035
- Ensuring carbon offsets are of the highest standard
- Requiring that a portion of carbon offset projects benefit Maryland and/or directly benefit environmental justice communities
- Facilitating the sharing of best practices through establishing offices of sustainability at each institution.

Sunrise Movement Howard County supports HB0803.

Signed,
Emma and Defne
Hub Coordinators of Sunrise Movement Howard County