



MARYLAND LEAGUE
OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

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SUPPORT HB66: Maryland Coal Community Transition Act of 2021

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

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Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

Maryland League of Conservation Voters strongly supports HB66: Maryland Coal Community Transition Act of 2021 and we thank Delegate Brooks for his leadership on this issue.

In 2019, the General Assembly showed leadership and vision in passing the Clean Energy Jobs Act, requiring 50% of our state's energy to be derived from renewable energy sources by the year 2030. Your actions last year were important, and bold, and set our state on the path to the forefront of climate policy nationwide. We are all grateful for your work. This year there are several ambitious bills being presented that would make our state a leader in climate legislation. HB66 is one of these important legislative actions, recognizing that as we elevate the clean energy technologies of wind and solar, we must also move away from dirty energy sources, including coal. The health and environmental imperatives of this bill are clear: 88% of Marylanders live in counties unable to meet the clean air standards set by the EPA, leading to significant negative health impacts, especially in communities of color.

Additionally, coal-fired power plants are the second leading source of Maryland's in-state climate pollution. If we are to do our part in addressing the climate crisis, and protecting the health of our communities, we must close our last remaining coal-burning plants. The imperative, however, also lies in ensuring that the workers and communities that rely on the jobs these plants provide are protected against the economic devastation of plant closings without an adequate and just transition. When Covanta announced the closure of the Dickerson plant in Spring of 2020, they did so without considerations for the more than 100 workers whose livelihoods depended on it. This is why HB66 creates a worker and community transition fund to help transition current union workers with good, family supporting jobs into new, good, family sustaining jobs.

Maryland LCV strongly supports this important legislation and urges a favorable report on HB66.