UMDSGA_FAV_SB835.pdf
Uploaded by: Alpert, Dan
Position: FAV

The University of Maryland Student Government Association
Testimony for SB835
Education, Health, and Environmental Committee, Tuesday, March 9, 2021
FUTURE Act
POSITION: FAVORABLE

My name is Dan Alpert and I am the Student Body President at the University of Maryland, College Park. I'd like to start by thanking Chair Pinsky and all the members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the opportunity to share our thoughts on this bill, as well as Senator Rosapepe for introducing the legislation, which will create a more environmentally friendly and just society for all Marylanders.

At the University of Maryland (UMD), I have helped create and lead grassroot efforts to accelerate our university's carbon neutrality goals, place more compost bins across campus, and celebrate the natural beauty of our shared community. These efforts have been fostered by our university's strong commitments to climate action. In fact, the university has reduced its carbon footprint by over 50% compared to 2005[1] levels and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2050, if not sooner. In addition, UMD's Office of Sustainability has led the charge in finding solutions to reduce the university's impact while funding hundreds of thousands of dollars in sustainability projects for students, faculty, and staff.

The climate crisis is no secret. Sea levels are rising and temperatures are warming. While it was 50 degrees during February here in Maryland last week, it snowed in Texas and was sub-zero for multiple days across the Midwest. Climate change is not an issue that we can tackle in five or ten or twenty years. We have to start now by taking action at the highest levels.

This bill will institute a goal that all University System of Maryland (USM) schools achieve carbon neutrality by 2035, a goal that will be accomplished by verified carbon offsets. This means for every ton of CO2 a school produces, they will support a project that removes or sequesters an equivalent amount of carbon. This might take the form of wind energy projects in the western panhandle, or by conserving wetlands in the Chesapeake Bay. Further, the bill stipulates that a portion of these offsets must go towards environmental justice initiatives to protect Maryland communities that are already being marginalized due to the climate crisis. This bill will show the state's dedication to being a leader in the fight against climate change while protecting many areas that are already feeling its detrimental effects.

This bill will also require that all USM schools create an Office of Sustainability by 2023. This office will provide sustainability education tutorials for all students, organize and facilitate eco-friendly activities, and be a resource of sustainability information specific to each institution. Our university is a leader in this front, and I see this bill as an opportunity for all USM students to partake in environmental action within their community. Likewise, this bill will provide the experiences those students need to create environmentally-minded citizens and ensure we take sustainable actions no matter the industry we enter.

We are all aware that we need to cut our emissions in order to prevent further damage. Given the immediate action that needs to be taken to protect our environment, the Student Government Association at the University of Maryland, urges you to give a favorable report for the FUTURE act.

Sincerely,
Dan Alpert, *Student Body President*
Kurt Willson, *Director of Sustainability*
Ben Baitman, *Director of Government Affairs*

[1] UMD Sustainability Progress Data. (2021, January). Retrieved February 23, 2021, from https://sustainingprogress.umd.edu/measuring-progress

MaryPIRG Students SB835 Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Anand, Greeshma
Position: FAV

MaryPIRG Students strongly urges senators in the Maryland General Assembly to vote YES on SB835, which will set deadlines for higher education institutions in the state of Maryland to achieve carbon neutrality. This bill will provide necessary solutions for mitigating the deteriorations of our environment, brought on in part by our state's carbon emissions.

Our climate is progressively getting worse as the amount of carbon emissions across the country steadily increases as the days go by. We see the effect greenhouse gases are having on our environment through the rising global temperatures, loss of sea ice, rising sea levels, increased frequency of heat waves, and more. Our planet is dying and there is no denying that. We must take bold action and we must do so now.

The FUTURE Act will provide a clear cut path for progressing towards a sustainable future by requiring higher education institutions in the state of Maryland to achieve net-zero carbon emissions starting July 1st, 2021. With the passing of this bill, Maryland can join states across the country who are also championing for our future.

But for this to happen, the decision lies in the hands of you, our legislators. You all have the opportunity to vote for a bill that can provide a future for your kids and their kids where they will not live in constant fear of what disaster comes next. You all are the change makers - the ones with the power - to do what is better for the masses.

I want to be able to feel hopeful for my future without the looming thoughts that I won't have one. I don't want to tell my kids one day that our planet is dying because our leaders decided against doing anything about it. This is our home and it has provided and cared for us for so long. It is time for us to step up and do the same back.

The passing of this bill will allow for a more sustainable future for everyone and for these reasons, MaryPIRG Students urges you to vote yes on the FUTURE Act.

Sincerely,

Greeshma Anand, *Board Chair of MaryPIRG Students*

Senate Melody Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Arrington, Melody
Position: FAV

Good afternoon Chairman Pinsky and senators of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs committee. My name is Melody Arrington and today I will stress the importance of the FUTURE Act and its potential to positively impact marginalized communities. Social justice has been a passion of mine since I was a child. However, when examining how to dismantle systemic inequality, too often is environmental justice left out of the discussion.

I am a junior at Bowie State University majoring in Government with a concentration in political science. I serve as the Political Action and Community Outreach Chair of the Student Government Association. Additionally, I am the Vice President of the Bowie State Youth and College Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Bowie State has reduced our carbon footprint by 15% since 2007 and has a goal of total carbon neutrality by 2021. I'm proud of the progress my HBCU has made as a leader in environmental stewardship in the state of Maryland. Bowie State, while making great strides in their sustainability goals, is only one out of twelve institutions in the University System of Maryland. Other schools, especially the larger University System of Maryland schools, can look at Bowie State as a model for sustainability goals. The climate crisis will disproportionately affect minority and low-income communities. Our universities like University of Maryland College Park and University of Baltimore are located in minority communities that will be positively impacted by this legislation. We need to protect our communities and our environment. It is imperative that this issue is taken seriously by our political representatives. University System of Maryland institutions create leaders, it is only right that they are leaders too.

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities in our state. According to the Maryland Coronavirus Data Dashboard, Prince George's County, a predominantly Black county, leads the state in Covid-19 cases at 72,250 as of February 22, 2021. Black and brown people

have increased risk of contracting Covid-19 due to what the Center for Disease Control outlines as social determinants of health which includes the physical environment and socioeconomic status. People of color are more likely to be essential workers, facing increased risk of exposure just to eat. The City of Baltimore and Baltimore county has a combined total of 90,031 coronavirus cases. Additionally, Baltimore city leads the state in asthma mortality and pediatric asthma hospitalizations. Air pollution and heat islands are few of many effects of climate change in our state and that can lead to public health problems including asthma that have exacerbated the pandemic. Often low-income communities are most impacted by environmental racism and Baltimore is no different. Pre-existing conditions like asthma and other respiratory illnesses increase the likelihood that an individual will contract Covid-19 and succumb to it. It is too late to reverse the effects environmental racism had on the Covid-19 pandemic. As the climate crisis escalates and we exhaust finite resources, inevitable phenomena like global pandemics and natural disasters will devastate marginalized communities first. We are at the turning point, action must be taken to protect these communities before irreparable damage is done.

I implore you all, as respected leaders in our state, make the ethical and necessary decision to dismantle systemic inequality and leave our planet better than you found it.

A key component of our bill is our commitment to environmental justice. As our legislators, you have the opportunity to positively affect communities that are heavily impacted by environmental racism. The component of our bill called the Environmental Justice Offset Project is just one of many ways our bill will tangibly transform marginalized communities affected by environmental racism.

I am proud to be a member of the MaryPIRG Student Climate Action Coalition. Our diverse coalition has grown from five students to hundreds. We represent a multitude of races,

cultures, and institutions, united because of our common goal. Our diversity is one of our biggest strengths because it demonstrates how the climate crisis will impact us all. Nearly every institution in the University System of Maryland is represented in our coalition. Additionally, we have representatives from Morgan State University and St. Mary's College of Maryland. The future of your constituents is dependent upon your decision. I am sure you all have children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews, whether immediate or extended. Imagine telling them they don't have a right to a liveable planet. How can you defend not fighting for their future? I, respectfully, urge you to make the morally just and paramount decision in favor of Senate Bill 0835, the FUTURE Act.

Reese Barrett Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Barrett, Reese
Position: FAV

Good afternoon Chairman Pinsky and senators of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs committee.

My name is Reese Barrett, and I'm a very proud Marylander. I was born in Annapolis, and have spent my entire life on the Severn river, crabbing and water skiing and rafting up on the Fourth of July with my siblings and parents. My family is built on a foundation of sharing time outdoors, and I know a lot of you can say the same.

Currently, I'm a sophomore at the University of Maryland, College Park. I graduated as valedictorian from Severna Park High School in Anne Arundel County, and I'm now majoring in chemical engineering with a minor in sustainability studies. I'm a straight-A student with a full academic scholarship, and I do research on campus because I'm hoping to someday earn a PhD and work as a professor.

I've also dedicated hours and hours to climate activism because I don't feel as if I have a choice. The climate crisis threatens everything I hold dear, including my river and all of the memories I've made on the water with the people I love the most.

It's true that taking action on climate is not an easy or cheap thing to do. But what is the cost of inaction? Economists say that it's about $50 per ton of CO_2 emissions. Our universities are in the perfect position to be leaders on this issue for a small fraction of that price. Schools represent both their own researchers who are at the forefront of climate science, and also their students, who are spending tens of thousands of dollars on tuition. We are investing in our universities, and they, in return, need to invest in our futures.

Universities understand the science, but there is no clear plan to implement strategies based on their values. UMD is in the process of renewing their contract for their on-campus natural gas plant. There has been no indication that the new 30 year agreement will include meaningful emissions reductions. If schools are not willing to make tangible plans and instead hide behind language of "life-cycle analysis," we need a state-level commitment.

As adults, and especially as people in government, you have a responsibility and a moral obligation to leave the world a better place than you found it. I want you to take a hard look at the cost of inaction, and I want you to tell me that this bill costs too much. It is past time to act, but you can start today, here, by taking real action that leaves a legacy telling your children and grandchildren, people like me, that you love them enough to protect the planet they will inherit. Thank you.

SB835_FAV_EnvMDandMDPIRG.pdf
Uploaded by: Breimann, Kate
Position: FAV

March 9, 2021
SB 835 - Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Position: Favorable

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Environment Maryland and Maryland PIRG are excited to support SB 835 requiring public universities to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. Action on our climate cannot wait, and this is an important step in transitioning our state away from fossil fuels.

This bill will help give our children and grandchildren a safer, healthier future by pushing our state universities to go fossil fuel free, promoting carbon-free transportation, reducing power plant pollution and more.

The climate crisis looms large, and we need all hands on deck to fight it. Our public universities can play an important role in this fight. SB 835 will ensure that our universities are part of the climate solution. This will also show our students that our state and our public universities stand with them, and are committed to protecting the planet and their futures.

This bill requires complete carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate goal requiring carbon neutrality for purchased electricity and direct emissions in 2025. These are reasonable and achievable benchmarks for universities to hit, and in line with the reductions scientists say are necessary. With the additional requirement of a dedicated position to ensure climate and sustainability goals are being prioritized and met, universities will be well-equipped to achieve these goals. As our campuses and communities shift to carbon neutrality we should invest in energy efficiency and ensure our energy choices are clean, safe, and tread lightly on the planet.

It is important to note that this bill is entirely student-led. Students asked for their universities to make this commitment and have worked tirelessly to organize around these goals on campuses across the state. Environment Maryland and Maryland PIRG proudly stand with Maryland's public university students, and urge you to vote favorably on SB 835.

Kate Breimann, Environment Maryland Director kbreimann@environmentmaryland.org
Emily Scarr, Maryland PIRG Director emily@marylandpirg.org

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Uploaded by: Bush, Emma

Position: FAV

Sunrise Movement Howard County

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0835– ***Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act***

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

Sunrise Movement Howard County supports SB0835, 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 SB0835.

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

SB 835_CBF_SUPPORT_RobinClark.pdf
Uploaded by: Clark, Robin Jessica
Position: FAV

CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

Senate Bill 835

Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

Date: March 9, 2021
To: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

Position: Support
From: Robin Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 835. This legislation commits the University of Maryland, Morgan State, and St. Mary's College of Maryland to certain deadlines toward achieving lower carbon emissions and carbon neutrality, which supports the efforts to clean-up the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Reducing greenhouse gases from Maryland's large buildings supports the Bay clean-up
This legislation is a comprehensive approach to improving Maryland's public higher education institutions existing carbon reduction plans by setting deadlines for achieving certain carbon reduction goals. According to the U.N. climate science panel, man-made carbon dioxide emissions need to fall by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 to prevent catastrophic environmental consequences.[1]

Climate change has immediate and drastic impacts on the Chesapeake Bay, many of which are already being witnessed. Warmer climates translate into warmer waters, which decrease dissolved oxygen, exacerbating the Bay's fish-killing "dead zones" and contributing to algal blooms. Rising water temperatures stress fish and reducing the populations from the Bay's iconic striped bass to brook trout. Other temperature-sensitive species such as eel grass, a critical habitat plant, are at risk.

Atmospheric deposition of nitrogen is the highest nitrogen input load in the Chesapeake Bay. Nitrogen pollution feeds algal blooms that block sunlight to underwater grasses and suck up life supporting oxygen when they die and decompose. The principal source of oxidized nitrogen, also called NOx, is produced by machines or processes that are powered by gas, coal or oil, like the heating of a building.[2]

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation may be a source of carbon offsets for Maryland institutions
Methods for achieving carbon neutrality under this legislation include purchasing carbon offsets for emissions that may not be fully reduced, which drives purchasing local carbon offsets. With a phased-in approach, the legislation will require 75% of carbon offsets purchased by institutions to be achieved in Maryland, the Chesapeake Watershed and environmental justice projects by 2055. This aim supports the environmental work that benefits the Chesapeake Bay and places rightful emphasis on environmental projects that improve social equity.

[1] Rowling Megan, *Net-Zero emissions: What it is and why does it matter so much?*, World Economic Forum, Sept. 23, 2020.
[2] Chesapeake Bay Program, *Air Pollution: What airborne pollutants are affecting Bay health?*, last visited 2.22.2021.

Maryland Office ▪ Philip Merrill Environmental Center ▪ 6 Herndon Avenue ▪ Annapolis ▪ Maryland ▪ 21403
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The WGL CleanSteps Offset Program partners with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to complete unverified offset projects, such as tree plantings that benefit the Chesapeake Bay.[3] The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is currently coordinating Pennsylvania's Keystone 10 Million Tree Partnership[4] and conducts tree plantings in Maryland, too. This is an example of work that Maryland institutions might use to offset their carbon emissions.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE SB 835. For more information, contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at 443.995.8753 and rclark@cbf.org.

[3] University of Maryland, *University Sustainability Council Carbon Offset Workgroup Report*, December 2015.
[4] Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, *For a clean Pennsylvania*, last visited 2.22.2021

CLPP testimony SB0835.pdf
Uploaded by: Goldberg, Donald M.
Position: FAV

Climate Law & Policy Project

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Contact: donald@clpproject.org

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Testimony on: SB0835 Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act
Organization: Climate Law & Policy Project
Submitted by: Donald M. Goldberg, Executive Director
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 9, 2021

Dear Chairman and Committee Members. Climate Law & Policy Project strongly supports SB835 and urges a favorable report.

HB835 requires Maryland public colleges and universities to become carbon neutral over time. One of the most important components of meeting this requirement will be achieving net-zero energy consumption in school buildings. CLPP has conducted research on the cost of achieving net-zero energy consumption in public schools and found, to the extent they exist at all, costs are relatively small and can more than be recouped in energy savings. We assume similar technologies, with similar costs, can be deployed at colleges and universities.

Numerous papers and articles, including from the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), say that net-zero schools can be built at comparable costs to conventional ones.[1] As a point of reference, construction cost for the net-zero Discovery School in Arlington, Virginia was $342/ft^2, including the solar array and site work.[2] A typical 2019 construction costs for high schools in 12 U.S. cities ranged from $325/ft^2 (Las Vegas) to $532.5/ft^2 (New York).[3] One company CLPP spoke with noted "unofficially" that its most recent venture, a net-zero mixed-use commercial building, cost the same as a comparable conventional building.

Because they are relatively new, cost of operating net-zero schools is limited, but there is ample evidence that, with cost recovery from energy savings, net-zero schools save school districts money. To the extent there is still some upfront cost increase to building a new net-zero energy school building, there are many financial options to finance upfront costs with savings achieved in operating costs.

In addition to cost-savings they can be achieved with new net-zero school buildings, there are cost-effective opportunities to retrofit existing buildings to achieve energy efficiency gains and potentially for on-site renewable electricity generation. Another company CLPP spoke with specializes in "turnkey" projects that cover all the design, financing, and installation of energy efficiency upgrades. The company takes over the buildings's utility bills and then bills the building owner directly at a guaranteed lower rate. According to this company, this arrangement can work for 70-90% of existing buildings — the older the building, the greater the savings.

Based on our research, CLPP believes SB835 will save schools money while reducing the State's GHG emissions. We urge a favorable report.

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[1] *See, e.g.,* National Renewable Energy Laboratory, *Technical Feasibility Study for Zero Energy K-12 Schools*, 2016, p. 1, https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy17osti/67233.pdf
[2] USDOE, *Zero Energy Is an A+ for Education: Discovery Elementary*, https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy17osti/68774.pdf
[3] Statista, *Average construction costs of educational buildings in the United States in 2019, by select city,* https://www.statista.com/statistics/830447/construction-costs-of-educational-buildings-in-us-cities/

UMBC GES testimony FUTURE Act SB0835- MBHolland.pd
Uploaded by: Holland, Margaret
Position: FAV

UMBC faculty testimony in support of SB0835

March 5, 2021

Good afternoon. I wish to thank the State senators for hearing our testimony today. My name is Dr. Maggie Holland, and I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography & Environmental Systems at UMBC. While I'm not an official spokesperson for UMBC, I am here to speak as a university educator, a researcher, and a mentor to students. I was also born in Baltimore, and part of my family heritage reaches back multiple generations within Maryland. I am a mother to two young future Maryland voters, students within the Montgomery County public school system.

I'm here today to speak in support of the proposed bill, SB0835, known as The FUTURE Act.

In light of others providing testimony here today, I'll keep mine to three main points.

1. This bill pushes the button to accelerate and reach net zero emissions by 2035, in line with global goals for keeping global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius. This also matches with the approach the Biden administration now seeks: to decarbonize the electricity sector by 2035 and reach net zero emissions for the entire nation by 2050. The state of Maryland is already a proud leader among US states in reducing emissions across sectors, and this bill helps incentivize action so that we can continue to demonstrate innovation and leadership with solutions for addressing the climate crisis. And what better places to stimulate that innovation than our universities and centers of higher education around the State. With the accelerated goals for net zero emissions that this bill lays out, our universities play the role of incubator of ideas, testing sites for new strategies, and can then lead the State in meeting the new federal targets.
2. This bill offers specific guidance related to carbon offsets, which often represent one key strategy for how universities plan to meet emissions reductions targets. Indeed, for my own university's Climate Action Plan from 2020, carbon offsets are one of four strategies for reaching our overall emissions reductions targets. In my own experience with research on conservation strategies for slowing deforestation in tropical countries, I am well aware that carbon offset projects are not a panacea but can be useful tools in our climate solutions toolbox. And we are at a point in time where we need to be calling up all the tools available to us. I am especially supportive of how this bill outlines specific targets for carbon offset projects, pushing us to prioritize efforts within our own backyards. I see this as also offering a stimulus for our universities to explore new opportunities for carbon offsets. Imagine a scenario where one day the same oyster restoration efforts that our IMET researchers support and that aim to make Baltimore Harbor fishable and swimmable could be eligible to receive carbon offset payments, as those powerhouse oysters not only filter water, but mineralize carbon from the air and store it as calcium carbonate in their shells. This is the exciting frontier that carbon offsets present, where we can explore ways to mitigate climate change while also yielding benefits for our valuable but degraded ecosystems within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Tied to this is the special carve out in this bill for environmental justice projects as eligible for carbon offset equivalents. As UMBC has made important steps forward as a community engaged campus, here yet is another mechanism through which we can work to engage and empower the actions of communities that have already been experiencing the layered injustices of systemic racism, and support efforts that prioritize social and climate justice. Here our universities can be centers of innovation around community engagement and empowerment tied to climate justice. In this example, I think of the work of organizations such as Baltimore Composting Collective, which works to implement neighborhood-scale composting in South Baltimore, diverting food waste away

from incineration, directing it instead to soil compost for urban gardening, representing work opportunities and healthy food alternatives for a community hard hit by air pollution and other environmental degradation. With these targets for local and environmental justice-related projects, this bill opens the door for universities to demonstrate the multiple ways that climate action can result in multiple benefits for communities and the environment in Maryland.

3. In the end, the reason why I am here today is to support this next generation, including the students who have led the effort to bring this bill to the floor. At UMBC, I have co-designed and co-taught a course that we call Climate Change & Society – global change in the Maryland context. It has everything to do with preparing students for the kind of work that I see these students engaging in today – communicating on climate science, analyzing the policy levers that exist to shift institutions and communities into action, and advocating for that action to take place swiftly. But honestly, climate change enters into every course that I teach, and concern about the climate crisis extends across our campus community, regardless of field, discipline, belief system, or even political affiliation. The students who have led the charge from UMBC aren't majors in my department, but this crisis is foremost in their minds. The generation of students we have across our universities today are committed to moving beyond political paralysis on climate change issues and getting to a position of committed action. I am here for that action, and I am here for them.

Thank you for your time.

Margaret Buck Holland, PhD
Associate Professor, Dept. of Geography & Environmental Systems
University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)

Nina FUTURE Act Testimony Favorable (3).pdf
Uploaded by: Jeffries, Nina
Position: FAV

Written Testimony In Support of FUTURE Act

Chairman Pinsky and senators of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs committee, thank you for taking the time to review my testimony. My name is Nina Jeffries and I am a native Marylander. I grew up in Takoma Park, went to school in Silver Spring, and now live in College Park. I am a junior at the University of Maryland (UMD) earning a double degree in Arabic and Environmental Economics. On campus I am a Peer Mentor, a member of the Student Government Association, Chair of the Sustainability Fund Review Committee, and am raising a seeing-eye-dog for a regional non-profit organization. I have interned with the UMD Arboretum and the U.S. Department of Justice and last summer I worked at a farm in Temple Hills and interned at an environmental law firm. This winter I started my thesis project which investigates intersections of environmental justice and environmental law. After I graduate, I hope to go to law school and study a mix of civil rights, constitutional, and environmental law.

Climate change is terrifying. I am here today because I have a responsibility to do everything in my power to mitigate the effects of our changing climate, to protect our state and the people who live in it. I am here today to use the power I have as a voter, activist, and student. The FUTURE Act will put our universities on an appropriate carbon neutrality deadline and it ensures that a portion of purchased offsets will secure co-benefits for the state. Beyond the benefits that the bill would bring the state as a whole, the bill aims to support students in specific ways.

By requiring at least one dedicated sustainability staff and regular meetings to share best practices and strategies, we hope that each school will grow to have a robust group of sustainability staff. The University of Maryland's Office of Sustainability is loved by students. It was formed in 2007 primarily to help the university meet the University Presidents' Climate Commitment but it has grown to much more than that. The Office helped create the Sustainability Studies minor (now one of the largest minors on campus), supports paid internships for undergraduates, and jobs for recent graduates. Through partnerships with the Department of Transportation, Dining, and Facilities Management, the Office has helped create programs that support commuters, reduce food and waste related emissions, and educate students about the impact of their on-campus activities. As an independent body, the Office runs their successful "Green Terp" Program and gives educational workshops on topics of energy efficiency and consumption, waste reduction, and waste diversion.

Sustainability staff are a fantastic student resource. The delegates in our coalition (MaryPIRG Student Climate Action Coalition) who have sustainability staff sing their praises. These staff have provided us with valuable insight as we developed our bill and they helped us connect with other energy and environmental experts. In the SGA, I can't think of many issues in the Sustainability Committee that we didn't look to partner with or seek input from the UMD Office

of Sustainability. For example, for several years students have been interested in raising the sustainability fee (it's been unchanged since 2010). This year we're looking to get the fee increased so the Sustainability Fund can support more projects. The fee and the Fund were started by the Office of Sustainability with student support. The Office of Sustainability is gathering input from other departments and the SGA is gathering student input, we plan to work together to determine an appropriate fee increase. The fund offsets undergraduate commuting emissions, provides funds for the SGA to give out mini-grants for smaller sustainability projects, and the remainder is available for faculty, staff, researchers, and students to apply for project funding. Without UMD's sustainability staff who advocated for the Fund, it is unlikely that UMD would be able to support such a wide range of projects that support student learning, improve campus operations, and novel sustainability research.

The Sustainability Fund has always enjoyed a high level of student, faculty, and staff support. Some funded projects are research oriented like a $45,000 grant for the Geography Department to study carbon capture in campus-owned forests, some projects support the physical campus like a $25,000 grant to support a novel high-efficiency HVAC system based on weather forecasting in the Student Union, and others support student learning and community outreach like a $13,500 grant to a student group to find engineering solutions for flooding issues at Lewisdale Elementary School in Prince George's County. The Office reports to the Vice President of Financial Affairs, this close relationship was key in instituting the student fee to support the Sustainability Fund. The Sustainability Fund is just one example of the value of having sustainability staff.

The proximity of the Office of Sustainability to the VP of Financial Affairs was important in establishing the University's Sustainability Council. The Council is chaired by the VP of Financial Affairs and advises the President on UMD's Climate Action Plan. In 2018 the SGA requested that the Council look into moving UMD's carbon neutrality date to 2025. In 2020 the Council endorsed a plan that would allow UMD to be carbon neutral by 2025. This endorsement not only demonstrates how vital sustainability staff is to advancing climate action and lifting student concerns, but it demonstrates that the 2035 date in the FUTURE Act is reasonable, achievable, and forgiving.

We hope if each school has sustainability staff and staff meet between schools regularly, that the sustainability offices can learn from each other. We hope that this will produce stronger initiatives to support students and foster new cross-university relationships and programs. We hope that information sharing will help equalize the abilities of all sustainability staff, despite differences in funding or staffing level.

Students understand the importance of having sustainability staff. UMD's SGA, UMD's RHA, UMBC's RSA, St. Mary's SGA, Salisbury's SGA, and John Hopkins SGA formally support the

FUTURE Act. The MD Campaign for Environment Human Rights, the Assateague Coastal Trust, the LSU Climate Pelicans, the Greenbelt Climate Action Network, UMD Sunrise, Go Green OC, the Assateague Coastal Trust, BALTIMORE Blue+Green+Just, Rachel Carson Council, St. Mary's Sustainability Office, and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network support the FUTURE Act as well.

Students support this bill as do the universities (with amendments). The two fundamental stakeholders support this bill. The cost of inaction on climate change is too high. Public universities are massive energy consumers, consuming roughly half of the energy for all state buildings. Public universities are some of the largest consumers of energy among all state facilities. Universities have a responsibility to lead and we as students have a responsibility to hold them to a high standard. We want to be proud of our universities and our state.

As I said before, I am here because I feel a moral obligation to protect our state. Education is a fundamental part of addressing any social, environmental, or economic issue. By supporting environmental education with sustainability staff we can create greater understanding of climate science, energy consumption, waste systems, and environmental injustices so our public universities can continue to produce well-rounded and well-informed students.

https://sustainability.umd.edu/sustainability-fund/grant-recipients/weather-technology-hvac-strategy-stamp - STAMP HVAC Grant

https://sustainability.umd.edu/sustainability-fund/grant-recipients/lewisdale-elementary-school-flooding-prevention-and-courtyard - Lewisdale Elementary Grant

MRM001S .pdf
Uploaded by: Mader, Melissa
Position: FAV

Residence Hall Association
MRM001S
March 2, 2021

A Resolution Supporting the MaryPIRG Student Climate Action Coalition's HB0803/SB0835: the Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

WHEREAS the Residence Hall Association (RHA) is the governing body for all on-campus students at the University of Maryland (UMD), and

WHEREAS RHA has responsibility regarding issues of sustainability on campus given the existence of the Sustainability Committee of Maryland (SCOM), and

WHEREAS RHA is committed to creating a more environmentally friendly-campus for its students and our Earth, and

WHEREAS MaryPIRG, a statewide student advocacy group with chapters at ten Maryland universities, is dedicated to reducing the impacts of climate change, protecting public health, and strengthening democracy, and

WHEREAS carbon neutrality is the act of achieving net zero carbon emissions, making carbon neutrality one of the most efficient ways for large organizations, such as universities, to combat the climate crisis, and

WHEREAS MaryPIRG's Student Climate Action Coalition (MSCAC) wrote Maryland House Bill 0803/Senate Bill 0835 (HB0803/SB0835) to push University System of Maryland schools towards carbon neutrality, and

WHEREAS HB0803, sponsored by Delegate Jared Solomon of Montgomery County, is currently under review by the Appropriations Committee of the Maryland House of Delegates after its hearing held on Thursday, February 25, and

WHEREAS HB0803 is cross-filed as SB0835, which is sponsored by Senator Jim Rosepepe of Prince George's and Anne Arundel County, and will be presented to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee on March 9, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 states that on or before January 1, 2025, each public senior higher education institution shall be carbon neutral for scope 1 direct emissions and scope 2 indirect emissions, and

WHEREAS scope 1 direct emissions includes emissions from boilers, central heating plants, power plants located on an institution's campus, vehicles owned by an institution's campus, vehicles owned by an institution, refrigerants and chemicals, and agricultural resources, and

WHEREAS scope 2 indirect emissions means emissions resulting from activities affiliated with an institution and that take place at a site that is not owned by or controlled by the institution, and

WHEREAS on or before January 1, 2035, each institution shall be carbon neutral for scope 3 induced emissions, and

WHEREAS scope 3 induced emissions means emissions produced by sources that are central to an institution's operations and activities, and are not owned or controlled by the institution, and

WHEREAS if carbon offsets are used to achieve carbon neutrality, a steadily increasing specific percentage of these offsets must be achieved in Maryland, in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, or through environmental justice offset projects, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 also requires that on or before August 1, 2021, each institution must designate an existing faculty or staff member to implement and monitor the institution's progress, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 states that institutions shall share relevant resources, best practices, and methodologies with one another, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 states that each institution's designated staff member shall meet quarterly to share these best practices and report on the progress made toward meeting the requirements of HB0803/SB0835, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 states that on or before December 1 of each year, each institution shall report to various Maryland General Assembly committees on the institution's climate goals, the types of carbon offsets used by the institutions, examples of the institution's collaborations with other institutions, and a summary of the quarterly meetings required by this bill, and

WHEREAS HB0803/SB0835 shall take effect July 1, 2021, and

WHEREAS the links to their corresponding documents are as follows: HB0803, SB0835, and their corresponding Fiscal and Policy Note, and

WHEREAS MSCAC has several recommendations to help UMD reach this goal that are included in the bill, including the implementation of electric vehicles, increasing energy efficiency, and converting to renewable sources, and

WHEREAS the support of representative student groups will be a key aspect to the success of HB0803/SB0835, and

WHEREAS the UMD Student Government Association, in addition to student government organizations and students groups at John Hopkins University, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Morgan State University, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and Salisbury University

have already passed resolutions and/or written letters of support demonstrating their collective support for the proposed bill,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that RHA supports HB0803/SB0835, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that RHA will write a letter of support for HB0803/SB0835, which will be submitted as written testimony for the March 9 hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that RHA urges the UMD Office of Government Relations to support the proposed bill, and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that RHA will send a copy of this resolution and RHA's letter of support to the UMD Office of Government Relations and relevant decision-makers as deemed by the Office of Government Relations.

Authored by:
Mel Mader
Senator-At-Large
Residence Hall Association

Approved by:
Alec McCarren
Vice President
Residence Hall Association

UMD RHA Written Testimony Supporting SB835.pdf
Uploaded by: Mader, Melissa
Position: FAV

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB835– *Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act*

Dear Chairman Pinksy and Members of the Committee,

University of Maryland's Residence Hall Association (RHA) supports SB835, the Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act of 2021.

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to the future of our planet and the lives of our youth. Youth are leaders in the climate movement for a reason, as the climate they stand to inherit is being damaged irreparably. We must act swiftly and decisively to protect and restore our climate, so that those that will inherit it can enjoy climate stability. We have a lot at stake here in Maryland when it comes to climate change, and 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. 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.

UMD students hold sustainability near and dear to their hearts. RHA's Senate regularly see resolutions concerning sustainability such as implementing competitions to see which residence halls can use the least energy, requiring our community councils to have at least one sustainability themed event, making strides towards creating a sustainability education segment as part of our schools mandatory student orientation before students arrive on campus, and a recent resolution to officially support SB835. Many of these come out of our active Sustainability Committee of Maryland which we have had since 2011. We are doing what we can to slow climate change on our campus and we hope that our representatives will do what they can to slow climate change in Maryland, including but not limited to passing SB835.

University of Maryland's RHA supports SB835.

Signed,

Melissa Ryan Mader

SB0835 Favorable FUTURES Act .pdf
Uploaded by: Phillips, Kathy
Position: FAV

Assateague Coastal Trust – PO Box 731, Berlin, MD 21811 – 410-629-1538

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0835 – *Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act*

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the FUTURE Act. Assateague Coastal Trust supports SB0835, the Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act of 2021.

We had the pleasure to meet members of this student led coalition, mentor them, and help to connect them with leaders of community groups in marginalized communities here on the Lower Eastern Shore as they conducted their research while drafting the bill. We are especially interested in seeing the language that a portion of carbon offset projects directly benefit environmental justice communities remain in this bill.

The Coastal Bays and Chesapeake Bay watersheds on the Lower Eastern Shore are already seeing the impacts of changes to our climate and rising sea levels, as our farm fields fallow from saltwater intrusion, wetlands are disappearing, and flooding events from stronger coastal storms are stressing wastewater and water treatment facilities as well as residential and commercial properties. Our most vulnerable communities on the Lower Shore are situated within flood zones and are the first to be impacted by increased flooding events. Warming ocean temperatures are causing our fisheries to move north, impacting our coastal commercial fishing industry. It is indeed time, now, to make the necessary changes in order to protect our coastal communities and economies. Inaction is not a choice.

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. 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.

We urge this committee to support this critical piece of legislation and vote favorably for SB0835.

Thank you,

Kathy Phillips, Executive Director

SB0835_FUTURE_Act_MLC_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Plante, Cecilia
Position: FAV

MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE COALITION

TESTIMONY FOR SB0835

FACILITATING UNIVERSITY TRANSFORMATIONS BY UNIFYING REDUCTIONS IN EMISSIONS (FUTURE) ACT

Bill Sponsor: Senator Rosapepe
Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition
Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0835 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members believe that this bill offers a great opportunity for Maryland's next generation to become leaders in the climate change fight by having universities develop plans to become carbon neutral. If passed, this bill would stipulate that each public university in Maryland would be completely carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate step requiring carbon neutrality for direct emissions and purchased electricity in 2025.

Direct emissions include emissions physically produced on campus, including boilers, central heating plants, on campus power plants, university owned vehicles, refrigerants and chemicals, and agricultural sources. Purchased electricity includes electricity produced by the burning of fossil fuels purchased by the university, but not produced on campus.

Universities can use carbon offsets to achieve carbon neutrality, but a certain percentage of those offsets must be purchased in Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay watershed, or through an environmental justice offset project. The percentages increase over time, starting at 5% in 2025 and going up to 75% in 2055.

If carbon offsets are used to achieve carbon neutrality, they must undergo a verification process to ensure they are effective.

Our members believe that this is an effective way to educate the next generation on how carbon neutrality can be achieved and an exciting opportunity to get our public universities engaged. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

SB835 - FAV - Future, GCAN.pdf
Uploaded by: Rosenthal, Lore
Position: FAV

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (EHEA)
Testimony on: SB835– *Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act*
Organization: Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Person Submitting: Lore Rosenthal, Program Coordinator
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 9, 2020

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB835– *Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act*

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

The Greenbelt Climate Action Network **supports SB835**, the Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act of 2021.

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to the future of our planet and the lives of our youth. Youth are leaders in the climate movement for a reason, as the climate they stand to inherit is being damaged irreparably. We must act swiftly and decisively to protect and restore our climate, so that those that will inherit it can enjoy climate stability. We have a lot at stake here in Maryland when it comes to climate change, and 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. 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.

The FUTURE Act will push our state's public institutions of higher education to the forefront of climate action, accountability, and research. The bill encourages the adaptation of low-emission solutions like an all-electric fleet or purchasing renewable energy while still allowing the universities flexibility through offset purchasing. GCAN sees this bill as an important systemic solution which will benefit universities, students, researchers, and residents of the state.

The Greenbelt Climate Action Network supports SB835.

Signed,
Lore Rosenthal, Program Coordinator
Greenbelt Climate Action Network

SB_835_StrongFutureMaryland_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Wilkerson, Alice
Position: FAV

A sustainable, just, and prosperous economic future for all Marylanders

STRONG FUTURE MARYLAND

Testimony in Support of SB 835 – Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act (Senator Rosapepe)
FAVORABLE

March 9, 2021

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

On behalf of Strong Future Maryland, we write in support of SB 835. Strong Future Maryland works to advance bold, progressive policy changes to address systemic inequality and promote a sustainable, just and prosperous economic future for all Marylanders. We believe that the goals of carbon neutrality and offsets established in SB 835 for public institutions of higher learning will achieve clear benefits to our state.

If this legislation is enacted, Maryland's public universities and colleges will be in good company. In 2013 the UC system announced the Carbon Neutrality Initiative (CNI) and pledged to be carbon neutral by 2025 from scope 1 and 2 carbon emission sources. Just down the road, American University was the first urban campus, the first research university, and the largest higher education institution in the United States to achieve carbon neutrality, in 2018. A year ago, Colorado College announced it was the eighth college in the nation to achieve carbon neutrality, even while increasing its building footprint by more than 10%. Five New England colleges—Amherst, Hampshire, Smith and Williams in western Massachusetts, along with Bowdoin in Maine—have combined their buying power to launch a solar farm in Farmington, Maine, University Business reported in 2018.

It's time to bring clarity, focus, and energy to Maryland's higher institutions and require a focused, scalable plan for carbon neutrality.

Just last month, an international group of scientists released a paper stating the planet is facing a "ghastly future of mass extinction, declining health and climate-disruption upheavals" that threaten human survival because of ignorance and inaction. The 17 experts say the planet is in a much worse state than most people – even scientists – understood.

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240-643-0024 | strongfuturemd.org
@FutureMaryland @StrongFutureMD

“The scale of the threats to the biosphere and all its life forms – including humanity – is in fact so great that it is difficult to grasp for even well-informed experts,” they write in a report in Frontiers in Conservation Science which references more than 150 studies detailing the world’s major environmental challenges.

Notably, the impacts of our slowly warming planet are inextricably intertwined with all our other challenges. Climate change impacts the likelihood of future pandemics, climate-induced mass migrations, and battles over resources. It affects Maryland’s agricultural economy, the ability of our biodiversity to thrive, and the health of the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays. As Maryland already faces severe air quality issues, climate change further compromises the health of our residents.

This bill takes critical climate action measures that meet the urgency of this moment in time, and does so at the very public institutions that should be forward-thinking as they nurture the leaders of tomorrow.

As a country, we are in the midst of a new racial reckoning, and we must not ignore the disproportionate environmental burdens faced by communities of color and low-income communities. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, communities of color and low-income communities in the United States are often disproportionately burdened by environmental and public health hazards, and enjoy fewer benefits from environmental programs and natural resources.

According to a 2015 report from the Environmental Law Clinic of the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, socioeconomically disadvantaged and African American communities in Maryland bear a disproportionate burden of cancer risk from air toxics exposure and are also more likely to live in close proximity to toxic releasing facilities like incinerators. The American Lung Association 2020 “Road to Clean Air” report gives Maryland abysmal grades for smog or ozone pollution, including F's for both Baltimore and Prince George's County. Across Baltimore, the hottest areas tend to be the poorest and that pattern is not unusual. In dozens of major U.S. cities, low-income neighborhoods are more likely to be hotter than their wealthier counterparts.

At the same time, by all accounts, Maryland is severely lacking when it comes to having policies on the books that advocate for Environmental Justice. The most important note from the aforementioned 2015 report: is that most of the formal recommendations made to the General Assembly languished over the period of 1999-2015. The Law Clinic states:

> "Maryland should adopt a more systematic and transparent approach to addressing environmental justice issues, including requiring each state agency to develop an environmental justice strategy and regularly report on its progress. The state should also create an Office of Environmental Justice to coordinate and support environmental justice efforts, expand community representation on the Commission on Environmental Justice, and develop new policies to address and prevent environmental injustice."

We appreciate the environmental justice focus of this legislation.

Maryland must do more for climate action — in the name of environmental justice, for the health of our communities, and for the future of our families. This committee can make a commitment to that work by issuing a favorable report on SB 835.

John B. King Jr.	Alice Wilkerson
Founder and Board Chair	Executive Director

SB835-FAV-CJW-FUTURE Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Younts, Diana
Position: FAV

CLIMATE JUSTICE WING
MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE COALITION

Committee: **Education, Health & Environmental Affairs**
Testimony on: **SB835 - "Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE Act)"**
Organization: **MLC Climate Justice Wing**
Person Submitting: **Diana Younts, co-chair**
Position: **Favorable**
Hearing Date: **March 9, 2021**

Dear M. Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB835. MLC's Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and grasstops organizations focused on getting State level climate justice legislation passed. Each bill for which we advocate is evaluated through an equity lens, with a particular focus on how disadvantaged communities are affected by the bill and the bill's climate impact. SB835 has particular merit because it will have both a significant impact on fighting climate change and because a percentage of any funds expended on carbon offsets must be for the benefit of communities most impacted by environmental harms.

The FUTURE Act establishes that all Maryland public universities must achieve complete carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate step requiring carbon neutrality for direct emissions and purchased electricity in 2025. It will require that our universities shift from contributing to climate change, to instead becoming models for sustainable living for future generations. The Future Act does not mandate how the universities achieve carbon neutrality, but does allow them to achieve carbon neutrality through the purchase of carbon offsets that meet the following criteria:

-- Starting in 2025, purchase at least 5% of its offsets in Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay watershed, or through an environmental justice offset project. An environmental justice offset project is designed to focus on a community most impacted by environmental harms.
--In 2035, 25% of its offsets must meet this requirement and 10% must benefit an

environmental justice community;
--In 2045, 50% of its offsets must meet this requirement; and
--In 2055, 75% of its offsets must meet this requirement.

If carbon offsets are used to achieve carbon neutrality, they must undergo a verification process to ensure they are effective.

Among the co-benefits of this approach to combatting climate change are that in-state carbon offsets support reforestation and renewable energy projects in Maryland that will bring better air quality, water quality, biodiversity, job opportunities, and environmental education for people in our state and is a good complement to Climate Solutions Now.

For these reasons we urge you to vote favorably for SB835.

UMCES testimony FUTURE Act SB835

Uploaded by: Nemazie, Dave

Position: FWA

University of Maryland
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

SB 835 – March 9, 2021 – Education, Health, Environmental Affairs Committee

David Nemazie, Chief of Staff

Thank you Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Health, Environmental Affairs Committee to allow me to provide this testimony on behalf of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES).

Since its founding in 1925, UMCES has been engaged in science to management programs to meet its legislatively mandated mission to "…develop and apply a predictive ecology for Maryland and her citizens." Our work spans numerous topics largely related to the Chesapeake Bay restoration, its watershed and species therein, from the mountains of Western Maryland to the Atlantic Ocean.

Unfortunately, global emissions of greenhouse gasses are increasing as are global temperatures. In fact, this past decade is the warmest on record. These projections are going in the wrong direction. Maryland is one of the most impacted states from climate change along with Louisiana and Florida. Maryland has made progress toward meeting its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, yet more aggressive goals then the Paris Agreement will be needed to significantly reduce (or simply slow down) the impact of a hotter Maryland with warming and rising seas, and more impactful storms.

We are pleased that the Sponsor has worked so closely with students from across the University System of Maryland, including those from UMCES, in drafting this bill. We recognize that the climate change challenges over the next few decades will be great and will have an enormous impact on their economy and quality of life as it will for generations to come – even as practices to reduce emissions are incorporated.

On UMCES campuses, as well as many campuses across the USM, we have taken multiple steps toward energy efficiency and renewable energy sources all toward reducing emissions. For example, at UMCES Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge we flipped the switch in 2018 on a 10 acre solar field in additional a 46 spot parking canopy – with 4 charging stations for electric vehicles. These solar fields alone cover 50% of our energy needs on that campus. We've also installed multiple geothermal heat pumps, where and when feasible. UMCES has been committed to upgrading aging infrastructure to newer, more energy-efficient alternatives, and building all new campus buildings to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent.

We support the goals of this bill toward carbon neutrality and applaud the students and sponsor for challenging us to react faster. However, our concerns are related to if and how the costs of becoming carbon neutral will be covered without additional State investment. Such costs include: 1) new facilities with potentially higher standard costs; 2) facilities renewal projects with higher standard costs; and 3)

the true costs of carbon credits, particularly those from within the region which we agree would be preferred due to their added benefits.

If the entire State capital program is not brought into this bill, we ask that more time be given to achieve these important goals, in-line with other State carbon reduction planning efforts. With additional resources where necessary, UMCES would be willing to serve as a pilot institution toward achieving aspects of carbon neutrality so the rest of the USM and the entire State can learn from our carbon reduction planning and implementation efforts.

UMCES looks forward to continue working with the Sponsor and Committee and offers its Support with Amendments to SB835.

SB 835 - Facilitating University Transformations

Uploaded by: Yates, Anna

Position: INFO

ST MARY'S COLLEGE of MARYLAND
The National Public Honors College

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
47645 College Drive
St. Mary's City, MD 20686

www.smcm.edu
TEL: 240-895-4410
FAX: 240-895-4462

Senate Bill 835
Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 9, 2021

Letter of Information – Amendments Requested

Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on Senate Bill 835 - Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act. St. Mary's College has been actively working to reduce its carbon footprint for many years. We were a leader in the early adoption of green building practices and have implemented a variety of energy conservation projects on campus, including an Energy Performance Contract that reduced energy use by 20%.

The College's sustainability efforts benefit from significant participation by the campus community. Our students have made substantial contributions, including funding our purchase of Renewable Energy Credits (REC's), which cover 100% of our electrical consumption, a geothermal heat pump system for our James P. Muldoon River Center, and a variety of other energy conservation projects, such as high efficient heat pumps in student residence halls.

While the College has successfully implemented a variety of meaningful initiatives, reaching full carbon neutrality, however, would be challenging and would require a significant additional investment. The costs associated with reaching carbon neutrality are difficult to determine for a variety of reasons, including the volatility of the market for offsets, uncertainty in developing markets for offsets in Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, or through an Environmental Justice Offset project, and the more than 20 year implementation timeline required by the Bill. In addition, determining the carbon footprint for Scope 3 emissions (travel, water, and wastewater) will require significant analysis, further increasing the difficulty in estimating the cost to implement the Bill.

St. Mary's College's Scope 1 (on-campus consumed oil and gasoline) and Scope 2 (electrical) emissions are approximately 12,000 metric tons per year. Based on current pricing for offsets, the cost to acquire offsets for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions is estimated to be $70,000 to $120,000 per year, without factoring in any potential premium costs for a certain amount of offsets in locations required by the Bill.

The Bill is unclear whether the College's current practice of procuring REC's to cover our electrical consumption would qualify as an offset. If REC's are considered an acceptable offset for Scope 2 electrical emissions, then the cost to achieve carbon neutrality for Scope 1 emissions alone through offsets would be $24,000 to $40,000 per year. We suggest that the Bill be amended to allow REC's to qualify as an acceptable offset for Scope 2 emissions. We should not be penalized for the proactive carbon reduction steps that we have taken to date.

The Bill also allows institutions to implement energy efficiency and/or renewable projects to contribute to their carbon neutrality efforts. These costs will depend on the extent and type of project. As examples, a solar project at St. Mary's College that would provide 10% of our electrical needs would cost $1.5 to $2.0 million and replacing our vehicles with all-electric vehicles would cost about $0.5 million.

In addition to cost considerations, the College has concerns over a few specific aspects of the Bill. First, the requirement that the percentage of offsets located in Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, or through an Environmental Justice Offset project shall increase incrementally, to reach 75% of total offsets by 2055, is difficult to assess given market uncertainties. We request that the incremental increase in the percent of offsets in these areas be reduced or, alternatively, a provision be added to the Bill that would require the State to periodically assess the market potential to achieve these requirements and adjust them as necessary.

Also, the College does not support the Bill's requirement that an existing faculty or staff member be responsible for implementing the Bill and that the individual must report directly to the President. The requirements of the Bill exceed the workload of current employees and would require the addition of an additional position. Further, having the position report directly to the President is inappropriate. The President has a substantial workload and adding another position under their direct supervision would be very challenging.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Tuajuanda C. Jordan, PhD
President

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