

HEARING DATE: 2/15/2022

BILL: SPONSOR: Senator Benjamin Kramer

TITLE: Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (CCEJ)

POSITION: Favorable

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs & Budget and Taxation

Members of the Committee:

It has recently been brought to my attention that there is a bill being introduced for legislation titled, The Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (CCEJ), a bill I hope will define redemption by a careless century to the coming generations...

The bill proposes that private corporations given unprecedented license to despoil our land, air, and water be made to pay the public who suffer the damages of their brutal enterprises. Indeed, as the damages increase, so would the payments, until mercifully, future industry projections will show what common decency could not: destroying the fruits of the earth is ultimately unprofitable.

I am reminded of what is referred to as the "Tragedy of the Commons." Enclosure, or the sale of common land, began in England during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Enclosure laws were feverishly fought against by the common people from the onset, whose restricted access to the natural resources of those lands threatened their quality of labor and life. However, under a monarchy, the Enclosure laws only stretched and strengthened to become a harbinger of the Industrial Revolution that would rapine its way across the whole of the Western hemisphere. Capitalism is the incorrigible grandchild of the Tragedy of the Commons and its insistence on illimitable growth at any cost...

To this day, our modern myopia still recognizes this state of affairs as private enterprise: but for the people who are forced to manage what they do not control, there is nothing private about it.

The Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act has done all the work for the Committee by stating the gravest reasons for passing this bill in its very title. I urge you to demonstrate your position of authority where it is most necessary: for the general welfare of both the land and its people. Protect the Commons.

Respectfully,

Shondra Mirelle Dawson

Resident of District 5- Maryland

Poor Peoples' Campaign member