



January 14, 2022

BILL: SB0135
TITLE: Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act
POSITION: SUPPORT
HEARING DATE: February 15, 2022
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
SPONSOR: Senator Benjamin Kramer

Dear Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs,

My name is Jonah Kurman-Faber and I serve as Research Director for Climate XChange, a national nonprofit organization that provides research and technical assistance on state climate policy. I am submitting testimony in favor of passing Senate Bill 135, the Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act.

SB 135 provides substantial, new vital revenue that the state of Maryland needs in order to meet legally binding greenhouse gas reduction goals, create new business and workforce opportunities, and improve the health and safety of all communities. If passed, we project that SB 135 will generate over \$500 million per year in additional funding for transportation infrastructure, grid modernization, energy efficiency, workforce development, and other vital measures of the clean energy transition.

Many existing climate efforts in Maryland rely on existing budgets and appropriations, and new capital resources are required to hit the state's legally binding greenhouse gas reduction targets. SB 135 is a progressive, rather than regressive, funding source, and dedicates substantial new investment to environmental justice communities in Maryland. The bill also is compatible with other legislative efforts in the state around climate justice, environmental justice, and public infrastructure.

For example, SB 528, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, establishes new capital funds and grant fund programs for clean energy development, workforce development, net-zero schools, and other priorities. SB 528 appropriates an annual total of \$17 million to such programs, whereas SB 135 raises nearly 30 times the revenue for the same purposes. The programs established by SB 528 would be qualified recipients of revenue raised by the Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act.

For the reasons stated above, and for the fiscal health, public health, and environmental goals of Maryland, I urged the passage of Senate Bill 135. Thank you and please reach out with any further questions.

Regards,
Jonah Kurman-Faber
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Cc: Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee