



TESTIMONY FOR HB0310

Environment and Energy - Investment in Communities With Low- to Moderate-Income Households

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Rosenberg

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0310 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.

This is a groundbreaking bill, and we thank Delegate Rosenberg for bringing it to the attention of the General Assembly. We talk often about the disparities between wealthy communities and low- to moderate- income communities. We talk about those disparities as though they will always exist. While we would like to see more equity, the people in the wealthy communities have the loudest voices and the best lawyers and lobbyists to ensure that they are taken care of.

This bill actually directs the Department of the Environment to ensure that at least 40% of its funds are spent on low- to moderate- income community projects, and to create the policies to do that by December of 2023. In order to create the policies and procedures, the bill also requires the Department of the Environment to create listening opportunities with the residents of those communities to figure out what projects would help them the most.

This kind of forward-thinking, community centered planning and spending is exactly what makes Maryland such a great state.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.