



Committees: Economic Matters and Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB0516 - The Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 29, 2024

Dear Chairs and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB0516. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of nearly 30 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB0516.

The Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (CCEJA) is a priority bill for the MLC Climate Justice Wing because it focuses on the root cause of climate change – emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG), primarily carbon dioxide and methane from fossil fuels used in transportation and buildings, and it generates much needed funds to address climate change impacts. The Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 set ambitious and essential GHG reduction goals. Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan has given us a pathway to accomplish those vital goals.

Now, we must find the money to make the changes called for in the plan a reality. We must ensure that disproportionately affected communities receive the funding they need to solve serious and longstanding problems that have resulted from fossil fuel use and a lack of investment in infrastructure. Those problems include dangerous levels of air pollution, excessive heat amplified by the heat island effect, and inadequate transit.

The CCEJA takes the innovative approach of creating two funds from the revenue. The Household and Employer Benefit Fund and the Climate Crisis Infrastructure Fund were created to address both the economic and environmental aspects of climate change while creating alignment with the Justice40 Initiative. These funds not only protect disproportionately affected households and energy-intensive, trade-exposed employers but also invest in the improvement of the health and welfare of our citizens. Including a “polluter pays” provision without passing fees to end-users is crucial to environmental justice and protects our most vulnerable citizens.

The CCEJA would put Maryland on a commonsense, practical pathway toward a sustainable, vibrant economy. It would generate nearly \$18 billion by 2034 for investment in clean energy infrastructure while providing protective benefits to Maryland’s trade-exposed small businesses and its most vulnerable populations: low- and moderate-income residents and overburdened and underserved communities.

We recommend a **FAVORABLE** report for HB0516 in committee.

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Adat Shalom Climate Action

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Chesapeake Earth Holders

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Climate Parents of Prince George's

Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition

Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County

Echotopia

Elders Climate Action

Fix Maryland Rail

Glen Echo Heights Mobilization

Greenbelt Climate Action Network

HoCoClimateAction

IndivisibleHoCoMD

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Mobilize Frederick

Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Mountain Maryland Movement

Nuclear Information & Resource Service

Progressive Maryland

Safe & Healthy Playing Fields

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee

The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

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