

Committee: Economic Matters
Testimony: Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice (CCEJ) Act of 2024
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 29, 2024

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Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, we strongly support the Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act of 2024 (HB 516). This transformative legislation is a significant step towards addressing the urgent climate crisis and advancing environmental justice in our state.

The establishment of the Climate Crisis Initiative within the Department of the Environment is a crucial component of this bill. By assessing greenhouse gas pollution fees and allocating resources towards climate-related activities, this initiative will play a pivotal role in reducing our carbon footprint and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Furthermore, the creation of the Household and Employer Benefit Fund and the Climate Crisis Infrastructure Fund as special, non-lapsing funds demonstrates a commitment to providing tangible benefits to households and employers while investing in vital climate resilience infrastructure. These funds will not only support essential programs for low-income energy assistance but also facilitate improvements in energy efficiency, particularly in renter-occupied dwellings.

The bill will also require the Secretary of the Environment to collaborate with relevant state agencies to identify measures and programs aimed at enhancing low-income energy assistance and promoting energy efficiency in rental properties. These initiatives will not only contribute to reducing energy costs for vulnerable communities but also enhance the overall sustainability of our housing stock.

In summary, the Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act of 2024 (HB 516) represents a significant milestone in our state's commitment to combating climate change and advancing environmental justice. We urge a favorable finding of this critical legislation, which will pave the way for a cleaner, more sustainable future for Maryland and its residents.

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