

**Testimony in Support Fossil Fuel Transportation Fuel Act
HB1008
House Economic Matters Committee
3/1/2024
Jamie DeMarco, Maryland Director
Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund**

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, I urge a favorable report on HB1008.

Oil train cars that use train tracks in Maryland pose a risk to Marylanders. These train cars can explode, and they do. [In Quebec, a train car carrying oil exploded and killed 47 people.](#) Train cars that roll through Baltimore pose a risk to Maryland residents and infrastructure. It is only fair that, under current law, Maryland is compensated for the hazard of having these combustible materials on our railroads.

HB1008 would simply extend the same policy Maryland already applies to oil train cars to train cars filled with coal and methane gas.

Coal that uses Maryland's railroads does not pay any kind of similar fee to compensate the state for dangers they pose. Coal is transported in trains cars uncovered because covering it would increase the risk of an explosion. However, because it is uncovered, [coal dust consistently blows off of coal train cars](#), causing serious health damage to communities along the tracks. Coal dust contains [mercury, cadmium, and arsenic](#), all heavy metals with known toxic effects. While Marylanders suffer and bear the burden of transporting coal, they are not compensated.

Similarly, explosive methane gas rolling on Maryland train tracks does not pay any compensation to the communities on either side of the train car for the risk they are absorbing. [The United States Department of Transportation now permits methane gas to be transported by rail car](#), and this is happening with increasing frequency. Gas can explode just as easily as oil, and there is no reason why oil traveling by train in Maryland should have to compensate Marylanders, but gas should not.

The funds generated from extending Maryland's existing policy to cover coal and gas will bring in substantial new revenue. 40% of these funds should go directly to the communities along the route of the train cars. The rest of the funds can be used to help meet Governor Moore's pledge to invest \$1 billion a year in meeting our climate goals.

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