

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1008 “Fossil Fuel Transportation Fee and Mitigation Fund”

Environment and Transportation Hearing
March 1, 2024

Dear Mr. Chair and Committee Members:

Hello, my name is Dave Arndt, a resident of Baltimore MD, a Climate, Environmental and Social Justice advocate, a chemical engineer, a former Director for BP Solar in Frederick MD, a retiree of The National Institutes of Health and a co-lead of the Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing. Thank you for listening to me today.

The climate crisis is making extreme weather events more common and more costly. From 2010 to 2020, Maryland experienced 31 extreme weather events, costing the state around \$10 billion in damages. The last time CO2 levels were this high, the sea level was 60 feet higher. It is a good thing that sea level rise lags CO2 levels, otherwise the whole eastern shore of Maryland would be gone. Recurring floods in Annapolis, salt water intrusion on farmland on the Eastern Shore, and punishing heat waves in Baltimore are some examples of how the climate crisis is damaging lives and infrastructure. Maryland State and county governments have no choice but to make expensive investments to adapt to more frequent extreme weather events.

The big question is who pays? The current status quo is that we socialize the costs while the perpetrators of greenhouse gas emissions profit. Recent polls have shown that majority of people in Maryland want the polluters to pay.

HB1008 builds upon the existing 8-cent per barrel fee for oil transfers, to include coal and natural gas. In FY22, the oil transfer fee alone generated over \$6.8 million, funding environmental cleanup and contingency efforts. It is estimated that HB1008 would bring in roughly \$250 million a year.

While \$250 million is not the \$1 billion dollars a year that Maryland needs, it is a good start and this bill does not raise taxes and does what the majority of voters want, make the perpetrators pay.

For all of these reasons, I strongly support HB1008 and urge a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.