



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Testimony Prepared for the
Appropriations Committee
on
House Bill 0437
February 6, 2026
Position: Favorable

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am Reverend Melody Hession, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith community with congregations in every part of the state. We are historical supporters of the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act. In the past, my predecessor Reverend Lee Hudson offered a favorable testimony, and I submit this testimony to reiterate that support.

We hold that lowering carbon emissions is a social, economic, and moral necessity for obvious reasons; fire, drought, flood, sea rise, human displacement, storm catastrophe, infrastructure vulnerability, and human safety.

The Climate Solutions Act of 2022 accelerated GGR targets in Maryland, which we supported. The urgency is that we must do more, sooner. Projections of GHG-caused temperature rise have fallen short of what is actually occurring. And, apparently, the federal government will now operate with a policy of eliminating GGR goals and accelerating rapidly approaching worst case effects.

House Bill 437 supports an intent of the Climate Solutions Act of 2022 by requiring, before public approval and finance, that there be an assessment of the increase in vehicle miles traveled it would facilitate, together with prospects for other, less carbon intense transportation projects to be considered.

The worst fire and flood to come cannot be averted by expanding the carbonized economy. **House Bill 437** serves necessary State policy performance in current and future State transportation proposals, spending, and projects to avoid more of the same.

We exhort a favorable report for the sake of all Maryland's people.

Reverend Melody Hession