

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Joint Resolution 13 (Delegate Jenkins, *et al.*)

Rules and Executive Nominations

Climate Change

This joint resolution urges the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately halt its carbon dioxide reduction policies and programs and to withdraw its endangerment finding and related regulations until a full and independent investigation of the climate change conspiracy and science can be undertaken.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Compliance with this joint resolution does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: In recognition of Maryland's perceived vulnerability to global climate change and in response to rising electricity prices, over the past several years the General Assembly has passed several pieces of legislation aimed at improving energy efficiency, promoting renewable energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Most notably, the legislation:

- requires Maryland to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional cap-and-trade system designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from specified electric generating units by 10% by 2018 (Chapters 23 and 301 of 2006);

- establishes the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF), administered by the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA), to receive auction proceeds generated through participation in RGGI (Chapters 127 and 128 of 2008);
- encourages clean energy generation by modifying Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to increase the percentage of electricity required to come from renewable energy sources (Chapters 125 and 126 of 2008);
- addresses energy efficiency by codifying the EmPOWER Maryland initiative to reduce per capita peak demand and electricity consumption by 15% below 2007 levels by 2015 (Chapter 131 of 2008); and
- requires the State to develop plans, adopt regulations, and implement programs to reduce GHG emissions by 25% from 2006 levels by 2020 (Chapters 171 and 172 of 2009).

On December 7, 2009, the EPA Administrator signed an endangerment finding under authority of the Clean Air Act stating that the current and projected concentrations of six specified greenhouse gases in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. These findings do not themselves impose any requirements on industry or other entities. However, this action is a prerequisite to finalizing the EPA's proposed greenhouse gas emission standards for light-duty vehicles, which EPA proposed in a joint proposal including the U.S. Department of Transportation's proposed Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards on September 15, 2009.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 8, 2010

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