

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Joint Resolution 1 (Delegate Hill, *et al.*)
Rules and Executive Nominations

**Declaration of a Climate Emergency and Implementation of a Climate
Mobilization Effort**

This joint resolution declares that a climate and ecological emergency threatens our State, our nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world. It further commits the State to a statewide climate mobilization effort to (1) reverse global warming and the current ecological crisis; (2) eliminate, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from federal authorities, the production of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the State as quickly as possible, but no later than 2030; (3) immediately implement an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere; and (4) accelerate the development and implementation of adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying local climate impacts. The joint resolution also calls on the U.S. Congress, the President of the United States, and all governments and people worldwide to (1) declare a climate emergency; (2) implement a climate mobilization effort to reverse global warming and the current ecological crisis; and (3) provide maximum protection for all people and species of the world.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Compliance with the joint resolution would likely result in a significant increase in State expenditures (all fund types) beginning in FY 2021. State revenues would not likely be directly affected.

Local Effect: Compliance with the joint resolution would likely result in significant increases in local expenditures. Local revenues would likely not be directly affected.

Small Business Effect: Meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act, originally enacted in 2009 and made permanent and expanded in 2016, was enacted in light of Maryland's particular vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Under the Act, the State must develop plans, adopt regulations, and implement programs to reduce GHG emissions by 25% from 2006 levels by 2020 and must further reduce GHG emissions by 40% from 2006 levels by 2030; the 2030 reduction requirement terminates December 31, 2023.

Pursuant to the Act, by October 1, 2022, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) must report on the progress toward achieving the 2030 reductions as well as the reductions needed by 2050 to avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change, as specified. MDE is also required to review and publish an updated statewide GHG emissions inventory every three years.

In July 2019, MDE published the 2017 GHG emissions inventory. In October 2019, MDE released a draft plan to reach the 2030 reduction requirement. According to MDE, the draft plan provides a blueprint which, if fully implemented, will achieve greater than the 40% reduction required by the Act, with significant job growth and economic benefits. The core programs of the 2019 draft plan extend from the suite of programs developed for the State's plan to reduce emissions by 25% from 2006 levels by 2020. According to MDE, based on the recently completed 2017 inventory, the State's GHG emissions are already below the 2020 goal.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: Given the broad language in the joint resolution, a precise estimate of any increase in expenditures cannot be made. However, given the breadth of the actions contemplated under the joint resolution and the likely costs to achieve the GHG emission reduction and other goals identified in the joint resolution, compliance would result in a significant increase in State (all fund types) and local expenditures.

Small Business Effect: Similar to the State/local impact, compliance with the joint resolution would likely result in significant impacts to small businesses.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 20, 2020
mr/lgc

Analysis by: Kathleen P. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510