



Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Jared Solomon  
Maryland House of Delegates  
222 House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB 1520, Legislative Initiative to Establish the Sustainable Maryland Program Fund

Dear Delegate Solomon,

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC), we are writing to offer our support for your bill (HB 1520) to establish the Sustainable Maryland Program Fund mandate for a minimum annual allocation of \$750,000 be included in the Governor's Budget Bill.

Sustainable Maryland has received no core funding for the last four years, the program has been 99% supported through special project grants. Currently, Sustainable Maryland does not have enough resources to issue funds directly to local projects. The development and the maintenance of the core program functions has been under invested. The bill would allow staff to provide on-going training, peer-networking convening, and the ability to focus on comprehensive and technical sustainability projects. It will also allow Sustainable Maryland to issue funds and support direct projects to localities, totaling over 70 Maryland municipalities since 2017.

Supporting initiatives to meet the region's climate goals is a COG policy priority and the bill's passage will directly assist implementation of actions in Maryland communities that protect natural resources, facilitate suitable land use, conserve energy, reduce greenhouses gas emissions, and encourage smart growth.

Please contact Steve Walz, COG's Director of Environmental Programs at (202) 962-3205 or [swalz@mwkog.org](mailto:swalz@mwkog.org) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Walz', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Hon. Daniel Sze  
Chair, Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee

cc: The Honorable Ben Barnes  
The Honorable Tony Bridges  
The Honorable Lorig Charkoudian  
The Honorable Jim Gilchrist  
The Honorable Lesley J. Lopez  
The Honorable Sara Love  
The Honorable Julie Palakovich Carr  
The Honorable Emily Shetty  
The Honorable Dana Stein

The Honorable Vaughn Stewart  
The Honorable Pat Young