



HB1425 – Climate Solutions Act of 2020 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act

Testimony before House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 4, 2020

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Barbara Matheson, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **strong support of HB 1425**, to increase our states' response to the global climate emergency.

Global climate change is real. The question is no longer a matter of opinion or politics. Countries and corporations around the globe are legislating and innovating. The United Nations Framework on Climate Change concluded that the long-term temperature goal is to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Centigrade (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. In November 2019 over 11,000 scientists from 153 countries warned the planet “**clearly and unequivocally faces a climate emergency**”.

The time for debate is over. Now is the time for solutions. We must act with boldness and clear direction. There is no time for delay or complacency. **IndivisibleHoCoMD supports a reduction of 60% in fossil fuels by 2030**, an increase in clean technologies, a transition to electrical vehicles, and a plan for training and retraining to support workers.

The source of the problem is indisputable - greenhouse gases produced by fossil fuels. (Methane - which is a product of the fracked gas industry, is a more toxic but shorter-lived gas and is also a problem.) The unintended consequences of the Industrial Revolution are interfering with the earth's capacity for temperature regulation resulting in reduction in water supplies, rising oceans and increased catastrophic weather events. To protect the planet and its people, we must eliminate fossil fuels and transition to clean energies. The solution is straight-forward.

State governments, municipalities, businesses and industry are responding. This year the Florida legislature has filed more bills on “climate change” than in the past decade to address rising sea levels and severe storms. BP, one of the world's oldest (110 years) and biggest oil and gas companies has said it will cut carbon content of its products by 50% by 2050, an amount roughly equivalent to the emissions of Great Britain. Arizona's largest utility has pledged to be 100% free of fossil fuels by 2050. BlackRock, the world's largest investment management company, will phase out their fossil fuel investments in the coming years. The list goes on and on.

This legislation will not only protect the people and resources of our state but will place us at the forefront of innovation and technology. The green energy revolution is a multi-\$trillion opportunity for our business community. Maryland is in a great position to capture a good share of this commerce with our innovation economy and superb university systems. We will be aligning with newer economic realities. Frontline communities face a disproportionate percentage of the effects of climate change. This legislation helps to level the playing field for our most vulnerable citizens. Citizens will be better protected from illnesses related to climate, hardships of weather disasters, destruction of property and loss of income. Our children and grandchildren will have a brighter future without the clear and present danger of climate change to darken that horizon.

We encourage a favorable report.