

HB0503-FAV-DTMG-2-3-21.pdf

Uploaded by: Bartlett, Olivia

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB0503 - Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 3, 2021

Bill Contact: Delegate Pat Young

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 2500 members who live in a wide range of communities in Montgomery and Frederick Counties, from Bethesda near the DC line north to Frederick and from Poolesville east to Silver Spring and Olney. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep all the members of our communities healthy and safe in a clean environment. DTMG strongly supports HB0503 because Maryland needs a coordinated, government-wide effort to address climate change.

Climate change is already here and is an existential threat to the future health and safety of all Marylanders. Maryland already has nuisance flooding, high heat days, and storm surges on a regular basis. International experts have urged action on climate with increasing urgency to protect our children and grandchildren from the worst impacts of climate change.

Maryland has a number of programs that address climate change from various perspectives. What is lacking is a central office with authority to coordinate these programs across agencies. HB0503 will address this glaring gap in Maryland's climate responses by establishing the Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor to monitor ongoing efforts across agencies to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change and keep the Governor and the General Assembly informed.

The Office on Climate Change will also facilitate implementation of recommendations from the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and ensure that each state agency considers and addresses climate change in its operations. The Office on Climate Change will also have the authority to initiate climate change research and investigations to fight climate change beyond those included in the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations. Importantly, the Office on Climate Change will assist local governments in development of local plans to combat climate change.

This is exactly the kind of coordination that will make individual programs in Maryland's disparate agencies and localities more effective. Therefore, DTMG strongly supports HB0503 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Bartlett
Co-lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team
oliviabartlett@verizon.net
240-751-5599

SB518HB503 Support

Uploaded by: Cann, Bennard

Position: FAV

18 Feb-2021

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee
Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chair
Environment & Transportation
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support of SB518/HB503 - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment

Dear Chairs Pinsky and Barve,

On behalf of the Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA), which represents the 27 incorporated cities and towns in Prince George's County, I am writing to express support for SB518/HB503. The bill establishes the Office on Climate Change within the Office of the Governor. Additionally, the bill facilitates the implementation of the recommendations from the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, ensures that State agencies address operational impacts on climate change, initiates and oversees climate change research and investigations, and assists local governments in the development of local climate change plans.

The members of PGCMA adopted climate change and the environment as one of our legislative priorities because we understand the importance and the role we all have in reversing the negative effects of climate change. By establishing the Office on Climate Change and its functions as described in the legislation, the State will be well-positioned to move forward in a coordinated way to implement measures that would protect the Chesapeake Bay, reduce our carbon footprint, and improve the quality of life for all Marylanders. Understanding that municipal jurisdictions do not all have the resources to address climate change, PGCMA applauds the sponsors for including language in the bill that will provide an opportunity for municipalities to receive assistance from the Office on Climate Change with creating climate change plans.

On behalf of PGCMA, I thank you for considering this legislation and I urge a favorable vote on SB518/HB503.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bennard Cann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mayor Bennard Cann
President, Prince George's County Municipal Association

BaltimoreCounty_FAV_HB0503.pdf

Uploaded by: Conner, Charles

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

CHARLES R. CONNER III, ESQ.
Director of Government Affairs

JOEL N. BELLER
Deputy Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **HB 503**

TITLE: Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment

SPONSOR: Delegate Young

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 3, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 503 Environment - Office on Climate Change – Establishment. This legislation would establish the Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor to centralize climate change efforts across state government.

Climate change is no longer a matter to be dealt with in the future, but is presently causing devastation and requires immediate action. All government needs to have a coordinated interagency plan to deal with this all-encompassing problem. Knowing this, County Executive Olszewski appointed Steve Lafferty as Chief Sustainability Officer within the Executive Office to coordinate environmental efforts across Baltimore County Government. Mr. Lafferty was able to work with all departments and launch the Baltimore County Climate Action Plan. This helped focus all county agencies to work efficiently towards the same sustainability goals.

HB 503 would instate a Climate Change Office to coordinate climate efforts with the authority of the Governor’s Office. This office would also assist local governments who request services to improve climate efforts in their communities. This will help ensure a sustainable future for all current and future Marylanders.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 503. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.

Legislative Testimony 503.pdf

Uploaded by: Elliott, Richard DeShay

Position: FAV

Legislative Testimony:
HB503

I strongly support Delegate Pat Young's House Bill 503 to establish an Office of Climate Change in Maryland.

**RICHARD
ELLIOTT**
FOR MARYLAND

By Authority: Rich Elliott For Maryland Keanuu Smith-Brown, Campaign Chair Christian Hillian, Treasurer

HB 503 - MoCo - CE (GA 21).pdf

Uploaded by: Elrich, Marc

Position: FAV



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

February 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich
County Executive

RE: House Bill 503 – *Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment – Support*

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 503. This bill establishes the Office of Climate Change within the Governor's Office. The Office of Climate Change will help facilitate the implementation of the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations and ensure that each State agency consider and address climate change as it relates to agency operations. In addition, the Office of Climate change will assist local governments in the development of climate change plans.

Three years ago, the Montgomery County Council declared a climate emergency and called upon on all levels of government to initiate a massive global mobilization to restore a safe climate and build a sustainable economy by eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by 2035. Over the past year, the County convened several technical workgroups that consisted of 150 community members and ultimately produced 850 climate planning recommendations for the County to consider. The County is currently working with a consulting team to finalize its Climate Action and Resilience Plan, set to be released this Spring. House Bill 503 will assist Montgomery County and other local governments in attaining their Climate Action goals.

For the aforementioned reasons, I support House Bill 503 and respectfully request a favorable Committee report.

cc: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

HB503 - Environment - Office of Climate Change - E

Uploaded by: Harbeson, Kristen

Position: FAV



MARYLAND LEAGUE
OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

February 3, 2021

**SUPPORT- HB503: Environment-Office on Climate Change-
Establishment**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee

**Maryland League of
Conservation Voters**

Lynn Heller, Board Chair
Maris St. Cyr, Vice Chair
Michael Davis, Treasurer
Hon. Virginia Clagett
Stuart Clarke
Candace Dodson-Reed
Verna Harrison
Melanie Hartwig-Davis
Ed Hatcher
Hon. Steve Lafferty
Bonnie Norman
Katharine Thomas

Kim Coble
Executive Director

30 West Street
Suite C
Annapolis, MD 21401

410.280.9855
mdlcv.org
marylandconservation.org

Maryland LCV supports HB503: Environment-Office on Climate Change-Establishment, and we thank the sponsor for his leadership on this issue.

This year the Maryland General Assembly will, once again, be taking up legislation to take bold steps to address the growing crisis of climate change. With more than 3000 miles of shoreline, and more than 270,000 acres less than 10-feet above sea level, Maryland is one of the most vulnerable states in the nation to the effects of climate change. In addition to the rise in extreme weather events and other climate-change related natural disasters, many parts of Maryland are increasingly experiencing “sunny day flooding,” and extreme heat events that disproportionately affect communities already overburdened with pollution and negative health impacts. The policies outlined in HB503 would provide coordination at the top levels of our state government through the creation of an Office of Climate Change in the Governor’s office to ensure that our state has a central point of coordination to address the challenges Maryland is facing.

Maryland has a Climate Change Commission, with a mitigation working group co-chaired by the Executive Director of Maryland LCV. The Commission makes recommendations for state actions. The Office of Climate Change would take the next step to coordinate the implementation of these recommendations by centralizing current climate change initiatives throughout the state and assisting local governments who request services to improve climate efforts in their communities.

Maryland must take aggressive actions to stave off the most disastrous effects of climate change. But we must also address the impacts that have already arrived by coordinating the efforts of our local, county, and state agencies to build resiliency against future disaster. For this reason, Maryland LCV strongly supports this important bill and urges a favorable report on HB503.

MD Catholic Conference_FAV_HB0503.pdf

Uploaded by: Kraska, MJ

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 1, 2021

HB 503

Environment - Office on Climate Change – Establishment

House Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch) dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

House Bill 503 establishes the Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor to facilitate the implementation of the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations; requiring the Office to ensure that each State agency addresses ways the agency can mitigate the causes of climate change and certain impacts of climate change; requiring the Office to initiate and oversee certain research and investigations; requiring the Office to submit an annual report to the Governor and certain committees of the General Assembly

The Conference supports environmental legislation that recognizes the integral ecosystem in which we live. In his encyclical, *On Care for Our Common Home (Laudato Si’)*, Pope Francis states that “*What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? This question not only concerns the environment in isolation; the issue cannot be approached piecemeal.*”

Laudato Si’ is not an endorsement of specific public policy proposals; rather, it seeks to illustrate the importance of protecting our common home and issue guidance as to how to listen to all voices in solving this massive global crisis. Pope Francis explains that “[*t*]o take up these responsibilities and the costs they entail, politicians will inevitably clash with the mindset of short-term gain and results which dominates present-day economics and politics. But if they are courageous, they will attest to their God-given dignity and leave behind a testimony of selfless responsibility.” House Bill 503 aims to address some of the needed reforms policies and standards to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and hope they are a catalyst for meaningful ecological policy reform.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 503.

HB 503 testimony 013021.pdf

Uploaded by: Mahoney, Pat

Position: FAV



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

To: Members, House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Chesapeake Beach Mayor Patrick J Mahoney

Subject: Testimony Supporting House Bill (HB) 503 Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment

Committee Members,

As Mayor of Chesapeake Beach, a coastal town in Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay, I feel it imperative to ask you to support HB 503 which takes assertive steps to address the impacts of climate change.

While our state has established the Maryland Climate Change Commission under the Maryland Department of the Environment, I strongly support elevating the stature of this issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Patrick J Mahoney

Mayor, Chesapeake Beach, MD

(410) 257-6905



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

8200 BAYSIDE ROAD, P.O. BOX 400, CHESAPEAKE BEACH, MARYLAND 20732
(410) 257-2230 • (301) 855-8398

HB0503 MD NARAL SUPPORT.pdf

Uploaded by: Philip, Diana

Position: FAV



HB0503 - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment

Presented to the Hon. Kumar Barve and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 3, 2021 1:30 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB0503 - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment**, sponsored by Delegate Pat Young.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. As part of our efforts to protect reproductive freedom for all Marylanders, we work to ensure every individual has the right to decide if, when, and how to form their families, and to parent in good health, in safety, and with dignity. In doing so, we support the establishment of the Office on Climate Change to ensure the Commission's recommendations are implemented. The effects of climate change are increasingly threatening human health, with unique adverse reproductive and sexual health consequences related to air, water, and soil pollution, extreme heat, and natural disasters.

Research has demonstrated the reproductive health outcomes associated with environmental pollution include infertility, abnormal menstruation and puberty, endometriosis, recurrent pregnancy loss, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), fetal death, prenatal growth abnormalities, reduced gestational period, low birth weight,¹ pregnancy-induced hypertension and preeclampsia,² and genital and breast cancers.³ Additionally, rising global temperatures is making heat a more serious threat to pregnant persons going forward; exposure to unusually hot temperatures can lead to changes in length of gestation, birth weight, stillbirth rates, and neonatal stress.⁴ These health outcomes can cause enduring mental and physical trauma to pregnant persons and the infants they deliver. Substantial research has shown that low birth weight infants may be more at risk for many health problems; some may become sick in the first six days of life or develop infections, others can suffer from long term problems such as delayed motor skills and social development or learning disabilities.⁵ Furthermore, increased instances of natural disasters result in a disruption of reproductive health services which can lead to unplanned pregnancies; conversely, natural disasters can displace families and leave them

¹ Rashtian, J. et al. "Water and soil pollution as determinant of water and food quality/contamination and its impact on female fertility." *Reprod Biol Endocrinol* 17, 5 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12958-018-0448-5>

² Wang, A et al. "Environmental influences on reproductive health: the importance of chemical exposures." *Fertility and sterility* vol. 106,4 (2016): 905-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fertnstert.2016.07.1076>

³ Bhatt, R.V. "Environmental Influence on Reproductive Health." *International Journal for Gynecology and Obstetrics*, 70: (2000) 69-75. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7292\(00\)00221-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7292(00)00221-6)

⁴ Bekkar B, et al. "Association of Air Pollution and Heat Exposure With Preterm Birth, Low Birth Weight, and Stillbirth in the US: A Systematic Review." *JAMA Netw Open*. (2020); 3(6):e208243. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.8243

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reproductive and Birth Outcomes and the Environment. Retrieved <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/showRbBirthOutcomeEnv>

financially unstable resulting in reduced fertility.⁶ In both cases, individuals lose their reproductive freedom to choose when to become pregnant.

The Commission on Climate Change has clearly outlined the threats of climate change to Marylanders with emphasis on the need to protect the most vulnerable populations, including low-income urban residents who are more exposed to environmental pollution and extreme heat, and coastal populations at higher risk of flooding and mold exposure.⁷ Establishing the Office on Climate Change is essential to implement solutions which will mitigate further environmental degradation and protect human health and access to healthcare. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on HB0503**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

⁶ Tobin-Gurley, J., et al. "Displaced single mothers in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina: resource needs and resource acquisition." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*. (2010): 28, no. 2: 170-206

⁷ Grumbles, B. "2020 Annual Report" Maryland Commission on Climate Change. November 15, 2020. Retrieved https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/ClimateChange/MCCC/Commission/2020%20MCCC%20Annual%20Report%20DRAFT_11.09.20%20Meeting.pdf

HB503 - Office on Climate Change-Establishment - E

Uploaded by: Tulkin, Josh

Position: FAV



7338 Baltimore Ave
Suite 102
College Park, MD 20740

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB503 “Office on Climate Change – Establishment”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 3, 2021

Globally, nationwide, and in Maryland we are facing a growing, existential climate crisis. The signs are everywhere: unprecedented fires raging in California; record superstorms; analysis showing that the Colorado River has lost over a billion tons of water; huge decreases in winter snow in Maryland; flooding in Annapolis; and many, many more.

In Maryland, we have legislatively committed to significantly reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act declares that “[t]he State shall reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 40% from 2006 levels by 2030.” Envir. Art. sec. 2-1204. Legislation introduced this session – the Climate Solutions Now Act (HB583) – would update this target to 60% by 2030, to reflect recent analyses by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and require Maryland to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045.

This bill would help advance these efforts by establishing an Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor. We therefore urge a favorable report.

Mark Posner
Legislative Chair
Mark.Posner@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

HB503_SPONSOR Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Young, Pat

Position: FAV

PAT YOUNG
Legislative District 44B
Baltimore County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee

Chair

Oversight Subcommittee on Personnel

House Chair

Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Chair

Baltimore County Delegation

Vice Chair

Veterans Caucus



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 305
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3544 · 301-858-3544
800-492-7122 Ext. 3544
Pat.Young@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 3rd, 2021

HB 503 – Environment – Office on Climate Change - Establishment

Honorable Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee:

I am happy to introduce House Bill 503 Environment – Office on Climate Change - Establishment. This bill establishes The Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor. This office would be required to coordinate with the Commission on Climate Change to ensure certain recommendations are implemented as well as work with local governments on the development and implementation of local climate change plans.

According to NOAA, the global mean sea level is estimated to rise by at least one foot by the end of the century. As a coastal state, rising seas threaten resident's homes, vital infrastructure like roads, power plants, and water supplies, and the structures necessary for local jobs like oil and gas wells, sewage treatment plants, landfills, and many more. Further, climate change contributes to stronger and more deadly tropical storms that could pose a significant threat to the State of Maryland and the surrounding area, like 2012's hurricane Sandy that left hundreds of thousands of Marylanders without power and cost millions of dollars in damages. Creating an Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor would allow for a stronger and more centralized effort to address the important issue of climate change.

Overall, the establishment of this office would allow for greater coordination among Maryland governmental and non-governmental bodies regarding climate change and for the introduction of vital climate change initiatives. It would also allow for the initiation and oversight of research oriented around climate change and climate change plans as well as the resources required to implement those plans. Finally, it would benefit the greater Maryland area by assisting local governments who request services to improve climate efforts in their community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB 503.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Young".

Pat Young, 44B

HB0503-ENV_MACo_SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Butler, Alex

Position: FWA



House Bill 503

Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Environment and Transportation
Committee

Date: February 3, 2021

From: Alex Butler

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 503 with amendments. The bill would establish the Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor, responsible for a multitude of actions surrounding the State's response to climate change. MACo amendments would add uncodified language clarifying that the new office would not gain unnecessary regulatory oversight.

HB 503 establishes an Office on Climate Change required to (1) facilitate the implementation of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's recommendations; (2) ensure state agencies address climate change; (3) perform research and investigations into climate change topics identified by the Commission; (4) assist local government in developing climate change plans; and (5) report to the Governor and General Assembly on State actions to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Counties are on the front line of the effects of climate change, especially sea level rise and saltwater intrusion. As counties continue to combat climate change in a variety of ways, state support can be a valuable asset. Many counties do not have one department dedicated to climate change or sustainability, but those that do report highly of its effectiveness in coordinating larger efforts and providing support to the rest of the local government. The State should provide research and guidance to counties to plan and develop local actions that address the impacts of climate change in a way that best serves their residents.

MACo amendments to the bill would simply make clear that the Office on Climate Change would not implicitly gain regulatory authority to enact mandates on local government. This reinforces the intent of the original bill to create this Office to serve as a resource. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to provide a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** for HB 503.

MACo amendments:

On page 3, after line 15, insert:

“SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, notwithstanding any other provision in this Act, this Act shall not be interpreted to grant any new regulatory or oversight authority to either the Maryland Commission on Climate Change or the Office of Climate Change that did not exist prior to its passage. The role of the Office is intended to be advisory and facilitating, and any recommendations for new policy, standards, or requirements – including any affecting local governments or non-governmental stakeholders – would require legislative enactment before having the effect of requiring, regulating, or prohibiting any function or activity.”

On page 3, in line 16, strike “2” and substitute “3”.

HB 503_MDE_LOC.pdf

Uploaded by: abbott, tyler

Position: INFO



February 03, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: House Bill 503- Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or the Department) has reviewed House Bill 503-*Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment*. The Department would like to provide a letter of concern, given the risk of duplication and inefficiency considering current and comprehensive coordination among agencies on climate change, a continuing priority for the Hogan Administration.

House Bill 503 would establish the Office on Climate Change (“Office”) within the Governor’s Office. Provisions in this bill would likely duplicate work currently being performed by MDE in coordination with the Governor, the Governor’s cabinet agencies, the Chesapeake Bay Subcabinet, and the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (“MCCC” or “the Commission”). The specific provisions that would be established under this bill are discussed in detail below.

The bill would require the Office to “coordinate with the Commission on Climate Change to ensure the Commission’s recommendations are implemented”. MDE Chairs the MCCC and works in partnership with the Commission and other State Agencies to implement the recommendations that the Commission makes for action by state agencies. It is important to note that some recommendations may need legislative action, which would impact the ability of the executive branch of government to ensure, per the bill language, that those recommendations are implemented. Recently, the MCCC unanimously approved a recommendation for Maryland to adopt ambitious GHG reduction goals. The Commission, informed by the latest scientific findings on necessary action by developed nations to limit global temperature increases and by the research and analysis of reduction opportunities by the Commission’s Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Working Group (MWG), recommended a 50% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030. The Department released the executive summary of the forthcoming *2030 GGRA Plan* wherein the Department and the other Maryland state agencies advanced a portfolio of measures that will reduce Maryland’s 2030 GHG emissions to 48.7% below 2006 levels, very nearly achieving the Commission’s recommended 2030 goal.¹ The Department intends to supplement that plan shortly with updated estimates incorporating additional federal policies that will almost certainly bring Maryland’s emissions below the 50% goal, once the incoming federal administration provides more detail on its immediate climate policy actions.

1

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/ClimateChange/Documents/2030%20GGRA%20Plan/2030GGRAPlanExSum01272021.pdf>

Secondly, the bill would require the Office to “ensure that each State agency addresses: (i) ways the agency can mitigate the causes of climate and (ii) the impacts of climate change in the agency’s programs, policies, and financial expenditures.” The requirement for State agencies to perform the above provisions already exists in State law under Environmental Article § 2-1305, which among other provisions, requires each State agency to “review its planning, regulatory, and fiscal programs to identify and recommend actions to more fully integrate the consideration of Maryland’s greenhouse gas reduction goal and the impacts of climate change.” The Department coordinates with other State Agencies to perform these tasks under the current law.

The bill would also require the Office to “(3) initiate and oversee any additional research or investigations the Office determines are necessary to address factors that the office determines are substantial in fighting climate change but are not included in the commission on climate change’s recommendations.” As mentioned above, in addition to the work that MDE does in coordination with the MCCC, MDE’s Climate Change Program develops Maryland’s long term climate plans under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act. Developing the plans involves comprehensive emissions and economic impact analyses to evaluate the programs and initiatives needed in order to address climate change and meet or exceed the goals in the GGRA. The Climate Change Program also regularly performs additional research and analysis on specific topics.

Next the bill would require the Office to “work with local governments to: (i) develop and implement local climate change plans and (ii) identify resources needed for the implementation of local climate change plans.” Per current Environmental Article § Section 2-1302, one member of the Maryland Association of Counties and one member of the Maryland Municipal League represent local governments on the MCCC. There is currently active coordination between the MCCC, MCCC MWG, MCCC Adaptation and Response Working Group (ARWG) and local governments. As an example, the ARWG works with the Maryland Climate Leadership Academy. The Academy provides training for local government officials and employees on various ways to plan how to adapt to and mitigate the consequences of climate change.

Lastly, the bill would require the Office to “report annually to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding the state’s efforts to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change.” This is duplicative of the current requirement under § Section 2-1304 for the MCCC to submit an annual report to the “Governor and General Assembly, on the status of the State’s efforts to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change, including future plans and recommendations for legislation, if any, to be considered by the General Assembly.”

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor House Bill 503 during the Committee’s deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at tyler.abbott@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Tyler Abbott

cc: George “Tad” Aburn, Director, Air and Radiation Administration

1. E&T - HB 503 - Environment - Office of Climate

Uploaded by: Bennardi, Maryland Department of Health /Office of Governmen

Position: INFO



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

February 3, 2021

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 503 - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment - Letter of Information

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information on House Bill (HB) 503 - Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment.

HB 377 would establish the Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment and require the Commission to study matters regarding student behavioral health and mental health treatment and make recommendations on actions to improve current student behavioral health practices and programs. The Commission would be required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2021, and December 1, 2022.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 response efforts, MDH unfortunately does not have the fiscal or personnel resources to implement this bill if it is passed. Many of MDH's current personnel have already increased their workload and absorbed additional tasks that are critical to the COVID-19 response.

We recognize and value the importance of this bill and its impact on Marylanders. As such, we respectfully request this bill be held and reintroduced in the 2022 Session. We look forward to working with the bill sponsor(s) and appropriate stakeholders in the interim.

I hope this information is useful. If you have questions or need more information about this subject, please do not hesitate to contact me at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov or Deputy Director of Governmental Affairs Heather Shek at heather.shek@maryland.gov and the same phone number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Webster Ye".

Webster Ye
Assistant Secretary, Health Policy

HB0503 (SB0518) - LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Fahrig, Landon

Position: INFO



TO: Members, House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Mary Beth Tung – Director, MEA
SUBJECT: HB0503 (SB0518) - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment
DATE: February 3, 2021

MEA Position: Letter of Concern

House Bill 503 converts the Commission on Climate Change from a body with an advisory function to a policymaking body by creating an office within the Executive to implement the recommendations of that body.

Currently, the Maryland Energy Administration, Department of the Environment, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Planning, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Transportation, cooperate closely, utilizing their human resources and the expertise that they provide to develop collaborative approaches for the purpose of lowering greenhouse gas emissions, protecting waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, fostering resilience, and generally mitigating and combatting the effects of climate change. MEA and other State agencies participate, while soliciting and incorporating inputs from legislative, academic, industry and community representatives (among others), with great consideration given to the full spectrum of consequences for each program and policy.

This bill would supplant the efforts and informed opinions of the subject matter experts who serve the people of Maryland. MEA urges the Committee's thoughtful consideration of this information.