

February 11, 2021

Testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 583: Climate Solutions Now Act

Dear Chairman Barve, Chairman Davis, and Members of the Committees:

The undersigned organizations express their strong support for HB583: Climate Solutions Now Act and thank Delegate Stein for his leadership on this environmental community priority legislation.

Every year the urgency of the climate crisis grows more pressing, and our window for taking the aggressive actions to mitigate against the worst effects grows shorter. It is no secret that Maryland's more than 3,000 miles of shoreline and more than 265,000 acres of low-lying land make our state one of the most vulnerable to sea level rise and the effects of increasingly violent weather events. As the United States re-enters the Paris Climate Accord, it is critical that Maryland shows leadership in climate policy, to demonstrate to the rest of the country what is possible. The Climate Solutions Now Act puts us on this path, by advancing the following policies:

1. Increasing Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction mandate to 60% by 2030 and net zero by 2045;
2. Charging the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities with determining what percent of Maryland's climate funding must be spent in overburdened, underserved communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change emissions;
3. Creating a Worker Transition work group that will convene leaders in labor, industry, and policy makers to make recommendations to protect fossil fuel workers;
4. Planting 5 million trees, including 500,000 trees in underserved, urban communities;
5. Increasing our annual energy efficiency gains from 2% a year to 3% a year;
6. Improving air quality monitoring at landfills;
7. Requiring new state buildings to be net neutral and require efficiency gains in large residential and commercial buildings;
8. Purchasing new electric buses as the Maryland fleet turns over;
9. Prohibiting highway widening and unproven carbon capture and storage technology as emissions reduction pathways in our state climate planning;
10. Requiring accurate accounting of methane impacts and the use of best available scientific information in our climate plans.

This legislation is grounded in the understanding that climate justice is environmental justice. Climate change disproportionately impacts many low-wealth communities and communities of

color, including impacts to health, local environment, and income. This bill will directly assist these communities in three primary ways:

1. Reduce harmful carbon emissions in order to improve public health;
2. Ensure a portion of state climate funds are spent on environmental justice communities;
3. Help create jobs at all levels;
4. Invest in tree-planting, focusing on underserved urban communities

We strongly urge a favorable report on this essential bill.

350 Montgomery County	Friends of Sligo Creek
Alliance for Livable Communities	Green Towson Alliance
Arundel Rivers federation	Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Assateague Coastal Trust	GreenGrace (Maryland Episcopal Environmental Partners)
Audubon Naturalist Society	GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic
Audubon Society of Central Maryland	Grow Home
Baltimore Blue+Green+Just	Hall's Choice Farm, Ltd
Baltimore Green Space	Howard County Climate Action
Baltimore Peoples Climate Movement	Howard County Conservancy
Baltimore Tree Trust	Indivisible Howard County
Bikemore	Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake
Black By Nature	Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA)
Blue Water Baltimore	Ji'Aire's Workgroup
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church	League of Women Voters of Maryland
Environmental Justice Ministry	Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
CEPA	Maryland Climate XChange
Central Maryland Beekeepers Association	Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Chapman Forest Foundation	Maryland Legislative Coalition
Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Memorial Episcopal Church
Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund	MLC Climate Justice Wing
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility	MOM's Organic Market
City of Annapolis	Mont Co Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Clean Air Prince George's	Multifaith Alliance of Climate Stewards
Cleanwater Linganore, Inc.	Multifaith Alliance of Climate Stewards- Frederick CO
Climate Change Working Group of Frederick County	National Aquarium
Climate Law & Policy Project	Nuclear Information and Resource Service (for a carbon-free, nuclear-free world)
Climate Reality Project Baltimore	Parks and People Foundation
Connecting the Dots	Patapsco Heritage Greenway
Creation Care Action & Advocacy of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of UMC	Pearlstone Center
Defensores de la Cuenca	Potomac Conservancy
Emmanuel United Methodist Church, Laurel	Preservation Maryland
Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church	
Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park	
Friends of Quincy Run Watershed	

Prince George's Justice and Advocacy Council,
Archdiocese of Washington
Prince George's County Young Democrats
Public Justice Center
Quaker Voice of Maryland
Rachel Carson Council
Rock Creek Conservancy
Safe Healthy Playing Fields
Safe Skies Maryland
Severn River Association
ShoreRivers
Southern Maryland Fair Skies Coalition
Stony Run Friends Meeting (Quakers)
Strong Future Maryland
Sunrise Movement Howard County
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
The Biz Center Renewable Energy Incubator
Transition Howard County
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of
Maryland
Voices MD
Waterkeepers Chesapeake
WISE