



February 9, 2021

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 583 – *Climate Solutions Now Act***

**Dear Chairman Stein and Members of the Committee,**

Quaker Voice of Maryland supports HB583, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021.

Globally, we are at a juncture that will determine the course of our future forever. Climate change is here, and we are the last generation that will be able to change the course of the earth towards a livable future for all. We have the tools, resources and knowledge, and leadership to take action right now.

This bill ensures Maryland will be part of and provide leadership towards the new green future by:

- Ensuring Maryland is in line with the current climate science by committing us to a 60% reduction in carbon emissions below 2006 levels by 2030 and to reaching net zero emissions by 2045
- Restructuring our approach to climate justice by mandating that a percentage of all future climate spending must go to “disadvantaged” communities in terms of climate change, a term to be defined by experts and stakeholders
- Ensuring that labor voices are represented in our planning process, and that jobs benefit those who need them most
- Taking several immediate steps to reduce emissions, such as planting 5 million native trees by 2030, electrifying state vehicles, requiring several net neutral buildings and mandating energy efficiency increases

Quaker Voice was formed by Quaker Meetings throughout Maryland to give Maryland Quakers a more effective voice in state-level issues that speak to our values. Our faith as Quakers is entwined with our commitment to stewardship of the Earth and care for our natural resources. We see how the destruction of these resources creates inequality, destroys community, affects health and well-being, leads to war and erodes our integrity. We are all responsible for the care of our planet Earth. We love this world as God’s gift to us all. As citizens of the United States and Maryland, we understand that we represent the wealthiest of the world’s population. As such, we understand the obligation as well as the opportunity that we have to take action towards reducing the rate of destructive climate changes and at the same time invest in clean energy production, healthier communities, green infrastructure, and transportation that is not reliant on carbon producing vehicles.

For many years scientists around the globe have been urging action on climate change with increasing alarm regarding the rate of change that is now at a crisis level. Here in Maryland we have a lot at stake, with nuisance flooding, high heat days and storm surges already regular occurrences. Maryland State agencies have begun the work of establishing foundations from which we may respond to and mitigate the impact of this change. However, we must move towards a policy of halting and preventing further harm. We have an opportunity to listen to scientists now while signaling to the nation that Maryland is ready to embrace the new green economy. There is no more time to delay on meaningful climate action.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation.

Signed,

Dona Sorce

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