

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB1244 the “State Procurement – Concrete Preference” bill. I am providing this testimony on behalf of LafargeHolcim, a local producer of cement and concrete with operations throughout Maryland. Our dedicated manufacturing professionals and engineers help provide building materials that support our entire state, including materials that have been used to construct the Purple Line, the route 200 Inter-County Connector, and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

People often use the terms “cement” and “concrete” interchangeably so I always like to cover the basics. Cement is a binder in concrete and concrete is the finished product which we see in everything from sidewalks, homes, roads, bridges, dams, and skyscrapers. In fact, concrete is the second most used material in the world second only to water.

We all recognize the built environment is a major source of carbon emissions accounting for approximately 40 % of global emissions. A number that is likely to grow over the next two decades as population growth continues, urban migration increases, and more infrastructure is needed to support our communities.

I believe the adoption of this bill can help unlock the future of sustainable construction. Today, cement producers can produce blended cements with a lower carbon footprint than traditional cement. Type 1L cement is made by adding fine crushed limestone to cement blends. By replacing a portion of the clinker with ground limestone we can lower the carbon footprint of cement by 10 percent.

Type 1L cement has been approved for use in over 30 states. Tests have shown that Type 1L cement is similar in terms of cost and performance. To date, over 900 lane miles of highway paving has been completed with Type 1L cement in Colorado, Utah and Oklahoma. Unfortunately, it’s adoption in Maryland has been slow. This bill can change that by establishing a low carbon procurement preference for state procurement projects. The state can use its purchasing power to drive innovation and help reduce carbon emissions in Maryland.

On behalf of LafargeHolcim and our 650 employees in Maryland, I respectfully ask that you favorably report this legislation. Working together, we can help reduce carbon emission in Maryland.