



Maryland PIRG

Maryland Public Interest Research Group

March 1, 2022

HB729 - Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

Appropriations Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland PIRG is a state based, small donor funded public interest advocacy organization with grassroots members across the state. For fifty years we've stood up to powerful interests whenever they threaten our health and safety, our financial security, or our right to fully participate in our democratic society.

Environment Maryland is a citizen-based environmental advocacy organization. We work to protect clean air, clean water, and open space.

This bill will help give our children and grandchildren a safer, healthier future by pushing our state universities to go fossil fuel free, promoting carbon-free transportation, reducing power plant pollution and more.

This Committee and the Maryland General Assembly are working to set ambitious goals for emissions reductions from transportation and buildings, and our public universities can play a crucial role in achieving these goals. HB729 will ensure that our universities are part of the climate solution, while positioning our students and higher education institutions as a model for the rest of the state.

Young people have always been at the forefront of social change movements, and it makes sense that the University of Maryland System which sits at the intersection of state government and the education of our state's future leaders set the pace and the vision for bold and urgent climate action.

This bill requires complete carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate goal requiring carbon neutrality for purchased electricity and direct emissions in 2025. These are reasonable and achievable benchmarks for universities to hit, and in line with the reductions scientists say are necessary. As our campuses and communities shift to carbon neutrality we should invest in energy efficiency and ensure our energy choices are clean, safe, and tread lightly on the planet.

It is important to note that this bill is entirely student-led by a diverse coalition of student leaders from across our great state. Students asked for their universities to make this commitment and have worked tirelessly to organize around these goals on campuses across the state.

Environment Maryland and Maryland PIRG proudly stand with Maryland's public university students, and urge you to vote favorably on HB729.

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