

**February 25, 2022**

**Testimony - HB0729 - Facilitating University Transformation by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (the FUTURE Act)**

**Organization: Cedar Lane Environmental Justice Ministry (CLEJM)**

**Submitter: Lee McNair, Co-Leader**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

**CLEJM supports HB0729 - the FUTURE Act.**

**Institutions of higher learning in Maryland and elsewhere play a major role in determining, verifying, researching, and teaching the science of climate change, global warming, ecosystems and their environment. These public institutions also inform the public and educate our students regarding the harms and impacts of the climate predicament that we are caught in. Our future leaders, our scientists, technologists, engineers, our social scientists as well as our medical scientists all come from this university setting. These intellectual surroundings are where they learn of the harm from climate change and how we humans can exasperate or mitigate these environmental affects.**

**It therefore behooves these universities to set a**

**higher standard in mitigation than other institutions might currently be setting. YET THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND IS THE LARGEST EMITTER OF CARBON IN THE ENTIRE STATE GOVERNMENT!**

**This is both ludicrous and inexcusable! They should be setting an example of the best ways to help our world, not the easiest ways to harm it. They should be researching, developing, displaying how to mitigate the dangers; how to adapt; how to sustain and protect our forests, soil, water, air.**

**This legislation will ensure that our universities will become institutions of responsible actions, leading the way to carbon neutrality; redressing the harms created by their actions or inactions, and becoming the example that their students and the public need them to be.**

**This bill Requires Maryland's Public Universities to:**

- **become carbon neutral by 2025 (scope 1 and 2) and carbon neutral by 2035 (scope 3)**
- **Establish an Environmental and Economic Justice Scholarship Fund for in-state students displaced by climate change or coming from an environmental justice community**
- **Facilitate the sharing of best practices and resources by the establishment of collaborating Offices of Sustainability at each institution**
- **conduct a feasibility and implementation study regarding a requirement for a sustainability**

**education requirement in Maryland institutions of learning.**

**CLEJM supports HB0729 because it reflects and upholds respect for the interdependent web of all existence in which all life is sustained. It calls for action that, not only mitigates the harms being caused by the actions or inactions of the Maryland University System but it also promotes justice and provides our future leaders with the kind of example that will encourage their trust and their full participation in doing all we can to heal our home and it's inhabitants.**

**We, therefore, ask the committee to provide a FAVORABLE report in committee for HB0729.**