

Committee: Budget and Taxation

Testimony on: SB 228 - "Maryland Corps - Revisions"

Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's

Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer

Position: Favorable, with Amendments

Hearing Date: February 9, 2022



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of SB 228 - "Maryland Corps - Revisions." Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change causing pollution in our schools and our group is active in Prince George's County. In particular, we are currently working directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a Climate Action Plan for PGCPS

This bill revises the Maryland Corps program to create a Civilian Climate Corp (CCC) for Maryland, among other changes. Creation of a Maryland CCC is crucial for our future environment, especially given the current stagnation of the Build Back Better Act which would create such a program nationally.

Working on our campaign to achieve Clean Energy Schools at PGCPS we have worked with many talented students that are passionate about creating a liveable future. Whether it is students that participate in Green Teams or other environmental clubs that come from a variety of educational interests, but are working to self start environmental projects like onsite composting and native gardening at their campuses. Or whether it is students in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that are learning the hard skills needed for future clean energy jobs. Or even the young people in student government that are serving along with staff and experts to write a Climate Action Plan for PGCPS.

These students want to serve and they want a liveable, healthful planet. Creating a CCC would allow them the opportunity to do that in and for Maryland in their early working years. And it would allow these youth to work together and understand Marylanders from different backgrounds across the state and to foster a sense of pride in Maryland while working to benefit the environment for future generations of Marylanders.

We are encouraged that this bill will allow these types of students to serve in the future at a reasonable wage and we encourage that to be maintained. The Education Health and Environmental Affairs committee is currently reviewing SB 528 - "Climate Solutions Now Act," which also implements a CCC, but does not have such requirements. However, SB 228 is limited in the types of jobs available, especially for young persons that want to serve that come from a CTE program and have the hard skills to do energy retrofits, install solar panels, or conduct other necessary technical work. SB 528 allows for more potential areas of work and we should not limit the opportunity of young people with a CTE background to best serve their community too.

We encourage Chair Guzzone to work closely with Senator Pinsky to unite the best aspects of these two bills to ensure that the version of the CCC that passes this session creates both well paying opportunities and allows participants to perform the many tasks ahead for the climate. We believe that working together to merge the bills will result in a beneficial CCC program in Maryland, so long as both criteria are met in any bill intended to create a Maryland Climate Conservation Corp.

We encourage a **FAVORABLE** report with **AMENDMENT** for this important legislation.