

March 10, 2022

Written Testimony in Favor of House Bill 171 - Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (Cross-Filed Senate Bill 135)

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing to ask you to vote favorably for the Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (CCEJ). I thank Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo for introducing it.

The CCEJ plans for our already changing climate by placing an incrementally rising fee on greenhouse gas emissions, sending a market signal to businesses, reducing pollution, creating revenue for vulnerable populations, and building the infrastructure we need for a healthful, sustainable economy.

The CCEJ creates:

- Revenue for counties and municipalities to create and implement climate action plans.
- Revenue to invest in projects that are directly located within and provide meaningful benefits to environmental justice communities.
- Rebates for low and moderate-income families, as well as energy-intensive, trade-exposed businesses to support the transition.
- Administrative funds to support the Climate Crisis Council to implement plans yearly.

As a strong opponent of the proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) project, I am particularly concerned about the many troubling issues of environmental justice it raises. Environmental justice area residents (80 percent of the communities along the proposed routes) would benefit from the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities that would “establish certain criteria for the disbursement and investment of certain money in the Infrastructure Fund.” It would offer the chance for residents to provide their input and assessments into transportation and other kinds of projects as climate action plans are developed and the apportionment of monies to individuals, municipalities, and counties is considered.

We need to pass the CCEJ to create the means to implement this very important transition and truly support the communities most immediately affected by the climate crisis.

Thank you very much for all you do.

Sincerely,

***Susan R. McCutchen***

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