



March 8th, 2022

BILL & TITLE:

POSITION:

COMMITTEES:

SPONSOR:

HEARING DATE:

3/10/2022

HB0171 - Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act

SUPPORT

Economic Matters & Environment and Transportation

Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo

Dear Chairman, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Leslie Wharton and I am the one of the chairs of the Maryland Chapter of Elders Climate Action. We believe it is essential to take direct action to reduce our carbon emissions to protect all Marylanders from the devastating impacts of climate change we can see on our immediate horizon. This bill takes a substantial step to protecting while protecting low and moderate income residents from disproportionate impacts of the carbon fee, which is essential.

If we start to impose a fee of \$15 per CO2 ton on non-transportation fuel and incrementally raise that fee \$5 a year, capping it at \$60, by 2030 the price of a CO2 ton will be \$50, and we will have met the social cost of carbon. This is how you will protect your constituents and our economy. The transportation fee is purposefully lower, starting at \$10 per CO2 ton rising only \$3 per year, capped at \$37. If we don't impose that fee this year, the challenges of our changing climate will grow more and more unpredictable for everyone.

With a no-pass through provision those costs are not passed down to the end user, but if changes occur in prices, HB0171 designates 80% of the Benefit Fund to go directly back to low moderate-income families to help with any rising cost of living.

20% of that Benefit Fund is provided to protect high-emission, trade-exposed businesses. Manufacturing makes up about 6% of Maryland's GDP, and is the most prominent example of an energy-intensive trade-exposed (EITE) business.

The CCEJ compliments HB0695 by providing funding for Climate Crisis Plans. The CCEJ Infrastructure Fund supports all Maryland counties and municipalities to create their own Climate Action Plan and provides funds to implement them! At least 50% of the Climate Crisis

Infrastructure Fund must prioritize communities that have been affected by environmental injustice. Members of the committee, you more than ever know that Economic Matters.

I ask that you all vote favorably and move this bill out of committee.
Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Wharton
Maryland Chapter, Elders Climate Action
202-213-3262 (cell)

Cc: Members of the Economic Matters Committee & Environment and Transportation