



Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team

Committee: Economic Matters

Testimony on: HB0171 – Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 10, 2022

Bill Contact: Delegate David Frasier-Hidalgo

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 3000 members across all districts in Montgomery County as well as a number of nearby jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep residents healthy and safe in a clean environment and which promote equity across all our diverse communities. DTMG strongly supports HB0171 because it directly addresses these fundamental goals by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promoting environmental justice across Maryland.

Climate change due to global warming driven by man-made GHG emissions is already here. Maryland already has nuisance flooding, saltwater incursion on the Eastern Shore, high heat days, and storm surges on a regular basis. International experts have urged action on climate with increasing urgency in recent years for good reason: the consequences of not acting now will be very dangerous and very expensive for our children and grandchildren.

HB0171 addresses the climate crisis by setting a target of reducing Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions 100% by 2040 (with interim targets) and imposing two types of polluter non-pass through, fossil-fuel fees: a building heat fee and a transportation fuel fee. These fees will incentivize transition to use of clean renewable low and zero emission energy sources for buildings and transportation.

In addition, using the revenue generated through these polluter fees, HB0171 creates two funds that address environmental justice:

1. The Climate Crisis Infrastructure Fund will
 - invest in initiatives to improve the health and welfare of Marylanders, 50% of which will be invested in projects that are directly located within and provide meaningful benefits to environmental justice communities, and
 - provide technical assistance, capacity, and planning tools to county and municipal governments for mitigation and resilience projects.
2. The Climate Crisis Benefits fund will
 - receive 50% of the revenue from the polluter fees, and

- help low- and moderate-income households and energy intensive trade-exposed businesses to protect them from financial harm during the transition to zero-emission energy.

HB0171 thus will bring Maryland's goals for reducing climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions into line with the scientific recommendations of the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It will also hold polluters responsible for the damage they have caused and provide protection for all Marylanders, especially our most vulnerable families, businesses, and communities.

Therefore, DTMG strongly supports HB0171 and urges a Favorable vote on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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