



HB171 – Climate Crisis & Environmental Justice Act

Testimony before

House Economic Matters Committee

March 10, 2022

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB171**, which would protect the public health, economic well-being, and natural treasures of the State by setting new statewide, greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo in sponsoring this important legislation.

Climate change has long been a crisis that cannot be ignored, and Maryland now has the chance to make a real change, while still offering economic benefits to the state. The CCEJ (HB171) will aim to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2030 and 100% by 2040, using 2006 emission levels as the baseline. This ambitious goal will be met using market-based fossil fuel fees that will not be passed onto consumers. Two funds will also be established that benefit green infrastructure and low- and moderate-income households to protect them from financial harm. The added bonus of the infrastructure fund is that 50% of the account will be directed to projects that provide meaningful benefits to environmental justice communities.

For these reasons, we support HB171.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Virginia Smith
Columbia, MD 21044