

March 8th, 2022

HEARING DATE:

3/10/2022

BILL & TITLE:

HB0171 - Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act

POSITION:

Favorable

COMMITTEES:

Economic Matters & Environment and Transportation

SPONSOR:

Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo

Dear Chairman, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Baltimore, MD, I am writing to express my strong support of HB171. There is no more debate that we are in a climate crisis. Also, I would hop that everyone has read the most recent IPCC report, time is running out quickly for action. CO2 is a pollutant, just like mercury and SO2. We don't allow companies to freely dump them into the atmosphere, neither should we allow companies to freely dump CO2 into the atmosphere. Putting a usage fee on CO2 will help us move away from fossil fuels and put a more realistic price on the cost of using fossil fuels.

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.

For all of these reasons and many more, I ask that you all vote favorably and move this bill out of committee.

Thank you.

Dave Arndt

Retired Chemical Engineer and Climate, Environmental and Social Justice Advocate