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## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

### House Bill 171 – Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act Economic Matters and Environment and Transportation Committees

March 10, 2022

### SUPPORT

#### MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation  
American Jewish Committee  
Americans for Peace Now  
Baltimore Chapter  
American Israel Public Affairs Committee  
American Red Magen David for Israel  
American Zionist Movement  
Amit Women  
Association of Reform Zionists of America  
Baltimore Board of Rabbis  
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation  
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance  
Baltimore Men's ORT  
Baltimore Zionist District  
Beth Am Congregation  
Beth El Congregation  
Beth Israel Congregation  
Beth Shalom Congregation of  
Howard County  
Beth Tfiloh Congregation  
B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region  
B'nai Israel Congregation  
B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation  
Bolton Street Synagogue  
Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.  
Chevrei Tzedek Congregation  
Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
Congregation Beit Tikvah  
Congregation Beth Shalom of  
Carroll County  
Congregation Tiferes Yisroel  
Federation of Jewish Women's  
Organizations of Maryland  
Hadassah  
Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation  
J Street  
Jewish Federation of Howard County  
Jewish Labor Committee  
Jewish War Veterans  
Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary  
Jewish Women International  
Jews For Judaism  
Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah  
Hebrew Congregation  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Ner Tamid Congregation  
Rabbinical Council of America  
Religious Zionists of America  
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation  
Shomrei Emunah Congregation  
Simon E. Sobeloff Jewish Law Society  
Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
Temple Beth Shalom  
Temple Isaiah  
Zionist Organization of America  
Baltimore District

**Background:** House Bill 171, (HB171) would phase in a decrease of Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions by 60% in order to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040. The bill would also place a fee on all imported fossil fuels. Additionally, fossil fuel companies would be charged a fee based on the metric tonnage of the carbon they pollute from burning fossil fuels. The revenue raised by these fees would be directed to the Household and Employer Benefit Fund to protect low- and moderate-income households from rising energy costs. Revenue would also be directed to the Climate Crisis Infrastructure Fund to invest in initiatives and projects that are directly located in communities suffering most from environmental injustice.

**Written Comments:** The urgency of the climate crisis and the inequity of its consequences, cannot be understated. It is the single greatest existential threat we face right now, and it therefore needs to be addressed *now*. The measures outlined in this bill are ambitious and will not be easy but are necessary. For certain parts of our state, it already is too late, and if we do not act, it will be too late for the rest.

The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* teaches us to repair the world in which we live in. Jewish law clearly states that we are not to destroy the public domain. If passed, this bill would immediately put us on the track to reverse decades of pollution that have contributed significantly to the decline of our environment and has for generations disproportionately impacted communities of color.

The Baltimore Jewish Council and the The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore are committed to repairing our world. We represent The Pearlstone Center in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices, many of which are called for in this bill. We encourage this committee to join us in our mission to create a cleaner Maryland that is healthier for everyone. With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of HB171.

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*

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